Snake Eyes

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Snake Eyes

by AchillesLament (11Mydesign11), Destinyawakened, Identically_Different

Summary

Will Graham is a beauty to sketch, even if he's never seen it for himself. Hannibal Lecter will go out of his way to be sure Will notices him at any cost. What blooms of the friendship grows into something more quickly, but Will must over come his own past insecurities and trust again for anything to work with his mysterious beau.

Notes

* We wanted to try something new. Did a hell of a lot of research, so we apologize for any odd inaccuracies, the internet is only *so* helpful. We don't do pottery either so we did some research on that, too, and did what we could to help describe.
*If you like this, please follow Steph and Tab on tumblr! for more updates if you're not an AO3 member, or just to say hi!
*We will be updating this fix everything Wednesday, PST, give or take schedules.

Chapter 1

"It's in the eyes
I can tell, you will always be danger
We had it tonight, why do we always seek absolution?
It's in the eyes
I can tell you will always be danger" - **Snake Eyes**, Mumford and Sons

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The money was decent enough, and Will had little shame when it came to his looks, having not ever seen himself before. Modeling for art students was something the teacher of his sculpting class had asked of him once if he was interested, telling Will he had a very classical feel to his form and feature. All he had to do was stand there and pose, albeit naked sometimes, but being unable to see the people, Will didn't mind. An hours worth of work for one hundred dollars was well worth the efforts and gave him time alone in his own active imagination.

Will walked in, knowing his way around the room by steps alone, the teacher having made sure every class the room stayed perfectly the same. Eight steps to the center, two steps up, two more to the stool, I'd there was one. He disrobed as rhetoric teacher laid a hand on his shoulder to guide him into position. Seated, his back was arched ever so slightly, leaned over with his elbow resting up top his thigh, upturned hand cradling his jaw.

“Perfect, like that,” the teacher said. “Comfortable, Will?”

“Yes.”

“Nervous?” she always asked, and Will could always hear the smile in her tone.

“I'm fine, Alana.”

She touched his shoulder and left him to it without another word.

The room started to buzz loudly as people took their seats, and Will listened to their soft breaths and whispered words to one another. Most of them smelled of clean soaps, but one stood out, smelling of fancy cologne, and not at all as though he fit into a community art sketching class. Will chuckled to himself, using his imagination to think of all the reasons a man like that would bother to be here, but hardly found discrimination in it.

“Alright, everyone, as most of you know, this is Will, please be kind as he has been to let use him for our classes. No ogling, not snarky remarks. He does bite,” Alana said from Will's right, and it took everything in him to not snarl at them all just to prove her point.

Instead, Will sat perfectly in place, statuesque, with lightly tanned skin, and piercing blue eyes that were half hidden under tendrils of soft, chocolate curls.

Hannibal had looked up when the model entered, expecting the standard fare. He decided an art class might be a way to get more acquainted with Baltimore's society and more than that, it was a passion of his from very young.

What the man noticed, however, was quite the pleasant surprise: Unruly locks, sea-blue eyes and all held together by a perfectly muscled frame. His breath nearly hitched in his throat.

From that moment on, the student's attention was focused, razor-sharp and pointed. Hannibal subtly flared his nostrils and caught the scent of pine, dogs and musk. It was enchanting, a statue of the David in his very midst; he found himself trying to capture Will’s gaze far more than he’d care to admit.

The Lithuanian started to sketch, drawing the outline first; the perfect curve of the man's spine leading to his ample bottom making the artist nearly flush. It was, however, a bit surprising that not even a single glance was cast in Hannibal's direction.

The sounds of pencils and charcoal on paper were most of what Will heard, his eyes cast down, looking not where in particular, focused on nothing. Usually, he wore a pair of glasses, but Alana insisted in the classes he not do that, it took away from his look. Whatever that meant.

The class flittered on and Alana moved Will a few times when students asked for certain angles, or see a bit more clearly, never anything crude as he never allowed that. Finally at the end, she helped Will into his robe, the money for the class in his pocket.

“Thank you again. You’re the best model around,” she said sweetly, and patted his shoulder.

“I don’t mind. You know me, I’d just be at home having a drink with the dogs.”

Hannibal smiled at that, even despite it not being directed at him. He leaned forward, steeling his concentration as he all but beckoned the 'Adonis' to look his way; the allure was entirely inconvenient. Nonetheless he'd drawn a perfect likeness and was rather proud of his work. He was far from an amateur.

Alana noticed Hannibal vying for attention, and motioned him over, touching Will’s hand so he didn’t go too far yet, so she could introduce him to the other man. Will put on his sunglasses, turning at the touch.

“Will, I’d like you meet Hannibal.”

It was a great loss, to see Will put on the sunglasses. Why ever would he hide his beautiful eyes? Hannibal wondered to himself as he rose elegantly from his seat and walked over with a cool confidence that demanded attention. He smiled at Alana and then at Will, extending his hand to the model. "Hello, Will, it is an honor to meet you," he rumbled, his words smooth, like a jar of overturned honey. "Just as it was a pleasure sketching your likeness."

Following the sound of the man’s voice, Will took Hannibal’s hand and shook it, his own calloused against smooth, well cared for palms. Will felt a heat flush through him but smiled a little. “Thank you. I’m… afraid I don’t *see* what everyone else does, but Alana insists.”

Was Will referring to Hannibal, himself, did he find him uninteresting or was it merely a case of low self-esteem? The psychiatrist wasn't entirely certain, but it was not what he'd expected. "You are welcome," he said, still enjoying the touch, though he hadn't expected the rough skin. It seemed to contradict the very beauty the curly haired man portrayed but it said a lot about him as well.

Letting go, Doctor Lecter placed his hand back into his suit pocket and canted his head a tick to the side. "Alana is very precise with her interpretation of beauty, just as I am."

“I call them like I see them,” Alana said.

“She does,” Will agreed, his phone chirping in his pocket. “Afraid I must go. My Uber is waiting out front for me.”

Entirely disappointing. Hannibal nodded, all but bristling at the sound of the phone's annoying little ding. None of this showed on his face as his lips twisted into one last charming smile, his eyes looking warm as he all but demanded to be noticed. To be seen. "Ah, of course. As I said, it has been a pleasure, Will. I do hope our paths cross again."

“I’m sure we will, I’m here every Tuesday,” Will offered, offering a wave in Hannibal’s direction. Alana took Will’s arms to walk him to the door, even if he could manage on his own. Will thanked her and left, taking the steps he knew well enough out of the building, careful of the stairs where he held onto the railing to take the steps gingerly.

Once Will was gone, Hannibal walked over to Alana, his hands neatly laced behind his back. “Quite the impressive muse,” he said, discreetly so that only she could hear. “You two seem close. One has to wonder where beautiful Will spends his free time.”

Alana clasped her hands together in front of her with a smile. “Are you asking me where he spends his time, Hannibal? You can just ask, if you’re interested.”

Hannibal grinned, amused that she saw his intentions. "I find him interesting, yes. I would indeed like to know where he spends his leisure time so that we might become better acquainted," he nodded once, in agreement and studied her expression. "I would owe you one, Alana."

“Well,” Alana said with a nod of her head, the other students having packed up and left, bustling about behind them to leave. “Will lives a few hours from here, but he works in town. He has studio downtown. He gets coffee every morning around nine am at the cafe on 3rd. He spends most of his time at his studio.”

"Thank you, Alana," Hannibal smiled, genuinely, inwardly memorizing the details. "I will leave you to plan for your next class." With this he went back to his desk to gather his things and left the room.

“Have a good night, Hannibal.”

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The next morning, Will did as he usually would. He walked to his studio, set up for the day, and then walked with Winston across the street, letting the dog lead the way. He pushed the door open and the barista behind the counter greeted him as she usually did each morning. The steps to the counter were always the same, and luckily no asshole left a chair out today for him to trip over, and if there was, Winston would easily navigate him.

“Same as usual, Will?” she asked.

“Please.” Will sniffed the air. “Blueberry muffins today?”

“Fresh out of the oven.”

“One of those, too.” Will paid with his card, easily finding everything as it was always in the same spot. His muffin and coffee were set out on the counter.

“Just in front of you,” the barista said making sure Will had both items before walking away. Will took his coffee to the small counter on the wall to dress it with sugar.

Hannibal walked into the cafe at precisely nine am, dressed in a charcoal and maroon striped three piece suit. It was complete with a paisley tie and pocket square; the doctor was set on being seen this time. He ordered a coffee, nothing to eat as he didn't trust anything that wasn't of his own making and turned around to see Will at the counter. Delightful.

Walking over, he silently stood, somewhat near, awaiting the recognition from the exquisite model with his coffee in hand.

Will felt someone near, but said nothing, going about his business as usual. He put the lid on his coffee carefully. He then tried to guess where the person might be. Thinking they might want the sugar or cream, Will sidestepped left with Winston and then let the dog lead him away.

Hannibal was too offended to pay much mind to the dog, his ego all but cracking at the lack of attention. He opted to skip the sugar, and with the lid affixed to his cup walked around and interceded Will's path, staring at his phone that was in his other hand. An accidental, but slight bump into the model's shoulders. "Oh, forgive me, I did not see you there," he lied, and then let his face take on a bit of surprised look, though polite. He smiled, and tried to capture his eyes. "What an ironic happenstance. Will isn't it?"

A bit of the hot coffee jostled from Will’s cup, making him wince once, able to hold the leash and the muffin in the other hand, fortunately. Startled, it took Will a moment to process, confused as to what happened, and then he steadied himself and brought his wrist to his hand to lick the drop of coffee off. It was then he smelled the expensive cologne from the night before. Familiar tone as well. “Uh… Hannibal was it?”

Not the greeting he'd hoped for, but Hannibal nodded all the same, glad his name was at least memorable if his appearance wasn't. "Yes, from Doctor Bloom's class," he answered, smiling but it didn't reach his tone or his eyes. "I seem to have made a mess. Would you allow me to buy you a second cup, or another one of those muffins?"

“It’s not too bad, is it? The coffee didn’t spill on the floor?” Will asked, not hearing Winston try to lap it up at least, so that was a good sign. Will chuckled. “I’d watch where I’m going but…” he shrugged his shoulders, a small smile on his lips.

There was no sarcasm noted in Will's question, so Hannibal assumed it was literal in nature and when he felt the dog sniff his slacks, he looked down and saw what type of dog it was. Ah, now it made sense. He inwardly chided himself for not having noticed before now; the beautiful muse was without sight. "No, fortunately it appears that most of it landed on you," he smiled, sincerely this time and chuckled at the model's joke. "It is alright, I should have been watching instead of checking my schedule. Would you join me for coffee at least, if nothing more?"

“I'm about to open my studio, if you'd like to join me there? I don't get much business this time of morning,” Will said, not entirely sure how he felt about the other man yet, but he was willing to try and get to know him since Alana spoke well of him.

"It would be my pleasure," Hannibal said, and then didn't offer his arm. He knew that would be condescending and presumptuous. The Doctor was enchanted all over again, now that his ego had been soothed, and placed his phone back into his jacket pocket. "After you?"

Will let Winston lead them to the door, which he then shouldered open once he was sure no one else was in front of it, and used his booted foot to keep it open for Hannibal. He waited at the crosswalk and when Winston barked, they walked, his signal that it was all clear. Will set his coffee down on the sill by the door of the studio and fished out his keys, feeling around for the lock and slid them in. Pushing the door in, he held it once more for Hannibal.

“Would you mind grabbing my coffee?”

"Certainly not," Hannibal answered and picked up the coffee, having been watching the dynamic between Will and the dog. He thought the model was entirely independent and it was refreshing. There was power in it, and his curiosity only increased from there. Walking inside, the artist looked around, a cup of coffee in each hand.

"Very impressive, Will."

“It’s not much,” Will said, letting the door shut behind him. The room was filled with sculpting supplies and tables, tools scattered about but in such a way that Will knew where they’d be if he needed them. “I’m a sculptor, if it wasn’t obvious.” Will let Winston off his leash, who still stayed very much near his side. Then, Will took the learned steps toward one of the tables, and waved toward it. “Have a seat.”

Hannibal nodded, and then remembered himself, walking over towards the table. Will was very talented, he thought to himself, as he took everything in. "Thank you and yes, you do beautiful work." He unbutton his waist coat after setting down the coffees and sat in the chair, one leg going over the other. "I would very much like to buy a piece from you, for my study."

“I hope you liked deformed busts,” Will chuckled, feeling out for the warmth of his cup of coffee, and then took it in hand. He opened the wrapped muffin and picked a bite off to eat it. “I’m told they’re good, but I can’t really attest to that.”

"The accuracy is astounding," Hannibal remarked, watching the curve of Will's mouth as he chuckled, the way his nostrils flared when he drew in his breath. Positively radiant. He sipped his coffee, holding it between his large palms and enjoyed the freedom of taking the model in without needing pretense. "I would not at all say they are deformed, if you are to trust a stranger's opinion. However, I do have quite an extensive knowledge when it comes to fine art."

“ I… like to feel out my subjects. Study every curve with my hands, it’s the only way to recreate it perfectly,” Will explained, a little more seriously. He slid his sunglasses off and set them on the table, and then took a sip of his coffee. Will’s eyes weren’t clouded like some

blind people, they were clear and beautiful, but never focused, just staring, every now and then blinking.

"Your absence of sight heightens your other senses, I'd imagine," Hannibal mused, looking into eyes that would never look back. It didn't detract from their beauty in the least and the doctor found himself nearly speechless. He let his gaze drop to the sculptor's hands, thinking of how they'd felt and licked his lips. "Touch, smell and even taste are often taken for granted by many in a world where appearance is everything."

“That’s true. I hear a lot, smell a lot. My empathy helps me know more about people that sight can usually lend to,” Will explained with a smile. “I smelled your cologne in class last night and then this morning. You have a distinct accent, too. It’s… sexy.”

Hannibal felt his skin warm at the compliment and he leaned forward, just a bit to let his scent waft even more. The bit about empathy was interesting, something he would want to explore. "Thank you, I am from Lithuania, originally," he explained, a smile in his tone and on his handsome face. "Likewise, so is yours...along with the hint of an accent that you seem to want to hide."

“Being blind is hard enough,” Will laughed, sitting back in the chair a little as he took another bite of his muffin. “Being from New Orleans, too?” He shrugged, teasing mostly. He took in every bit of Hannibal’s scent, taking a lot from that, and how much money he likely had. “Alana mentioned you were a doctor, is that right?”

Hannibal chuckled, warmly and leaned back as well, continuing to nurse his coffee as they conversed. "I have not been to New Orleans, as of yet," he remarked, the tinge of his happiness apparent in his tone. "I am a psychiatrist, yes. I have a private practice in the city and was a surgeon prior to that. I sketch for my pleasure as well as compose pieces of music, in my spare time."

“An artist in every right then,” Will mused, taking another sip, glad that Hannibal wasn't put off by his blindness.

"I do have a knack for beauty," Hannibal agreed, and licked the residual coffee from his lips. "Your empathy, however, fascinates me. Do you allow yourself to feel freely or treat it as fine china, only used for special guests?"

“Special guests. I can't let myself get wrapped in everyone around me, it's too difficult to keep focused on my surroundings,” Will explained. Will was honestly surprised someone like Hannibal would even be interested in the likes of him.

"Have you always been without sight or did you have it taken from you?" Hannibal asked, wanting to know everything about Will. Of course, it was in his nature to inquire, given his profession, but more than that he was beguiled by the work of art in front of him. "I would apologize for my intrusiveness but I fear I will only have to continue to do so and soon you will tire of hearing that. It is difficult for me to shut off my curiosity."

“No, it's okay to ask. I don't mind. I was born this way. My father says my mother got the German measles while pregnant with me. But, it’s just a genetic defect.” Will didn't mind in

the least, being blind was something he'd known his whole life.

"It is difficult to miss, that which you never possessed," Hannibal offered, with understanding. He finished the last bit of his coffee and placed it onto the table with a gentle clink. "Have you any siblings?"

“No. Only child. My mother left when I was very young,” Will explained, finishing his muffin and a took a swig of his coffee.

"I see," Hannibal said, in acknowledgement. He clasped his hands in front of him on the table, once again studying Will's mouth, and his eyes. "And your father? Are you close?"

“Not really. I learned to live without him for the most part. He got me a dog and books to learn to read braille by, and he thought that was good enough,” Will replied, shrugging once. “I moved far away from him for a reason.”

Hannibal sorted the information into his mind, and leaned forward again. "He taught you the basics and then you surpassed that, proving you could manage life on your own," the doctor complimented. "Just as I was forced to do, though in a different way."

“Oh?” Will asked, taking the lid off his coffee, he set it down on the table there and then sipped the last of his beverage. He raised his brows in the direction he was sure Hannibal was sitting, across from him, eyes distant.

"Yes," Hannibal answered, silently smiling at the man in front of him. "Both of my parents were killed when I was a boy. We do what we must to survive, wouldn't you agree, Will?"

“I’m very sorry to hear. How devastating,” Will offered, taking a deep breath, feeling every bit of emotion that Hannibal would not likely show. He set the cup down and rubbed his chest a little with the ache of the feeling.

Hannibal observed the gesture, canting his head. "Thank you, but let us move forward from unpleasantness, Will," he offered, a smile to his words as he softly stroked his fingers along the paper coffee mug. It made a soothing sound. The doctor watched for any reaction to the stimuli as he spoke. "I wonder if you would do a sculpture of me, something I might have in my office. I would pay well, naturally."

Will canted his head thoughtfully, imagining Hannibal there, but it was difficult to do without having an idea of what he might look like, well, *feel* like. “You want a sculpture of yourself? Most people ask me to do their pets.”

"I have no pets, or children," Hannibal began, wondering if Will thought him vain. It was more a way to see how he saw him, likewise to feel his hands on his face. "As such, this would be a sort of legacy that I could leave as well as a testament to your talent...if you are willing."

On the contrary, Will was just curious. Everyone was different, he found. “More than willing, if that’s what you’d like.”

"Excellent. When should we begin?" Hannibal asked, politely, eyes narrowed as he glanced again to in the endless sea of blue that made no waves in return. "I have the whole of the day at my disposal."

“I haven’t any clients today,” Will replied, sitting straight once more to clean up his muffin wrapper that took him a few tries to find and then his cup as well. He held his hand out Hannibal’s cup to throw away. “I can at least get if the first impressions done.”

Hannibal resisted the urge to insist that he throw the items away and handed over his cup, letting his fingers brush against Will's, briefly. "Very good and thank you," he said, and smoothed out his vest. "Lead me to wherever you normally work, once you are ready."

Will nodded, touching the table with his free hand, taking the steps to the trash, and then into the back room. He found the clay he needed, gathering it up, and set everything out on a table, patting around for his tools, though he did most first impressions by hand, he wanted to be ready. He pulled his chair up and then one for Hannibal in front of it. Then, he shucked off his jacket and his flannel, down to a white t-shirt.

“Just here, please.”

Hannibal had taken off his suit coat and left it on the chair he had been sitting prior, walking over to the working table. He sat down and kept his hands neatly on his lap as his eyes roved over Will's biceps.

"I am ready whenever you are."

Please, Will brought his things closer, the water based clay was ready, waiting. He had a round head shaped piece in next to him, near enough to get to easily. He had to start by feeling out the shape of Hannibal’s dome. He smiled and stood, touching Hannibal’s shoulder as he walked around him.

“Don’t mind me, I need to make note of the size of your head."

Hannibal smiled as he spoke, his tone softer, and yet deep. "I am at your mercy," he teased, and sat perfectly still. Already, he found Will's touch to be of comfort, soothing and gentle. "It is nice getting a chance to peek behind the proverbial curtain and watch first hand how you craft your art."

“You’ve just found out I sculpt, and yet you are already a fan?” Will asked, jokingly, hands resting on Hannibal’s broad shoulders, and then slowly worked up his neck, feeling out every muscle and curve, fingers sliding over his jaw, to his chin, and then up the back of his head, carding through product ridden hair. “I apologize for the hair.”

"I saw the pieces you had on display when I entered, that was enough to let me know I could trust your hands," Hannibal chuckled, still quietly as Will touched him. He enjoyed his humor, just as he got pleasure from watching each shift in the sculptor's face as he assessed him and joked. "No apologies necessary, you have a very skilled touch."

Will’s fingers moved forward, taking in every bump, the texture of Hannibal’s hair, the length, and then down his ears, noting the shaping and size, length, making mental notes of it all. Finally, his fingers drifting over his jaw and up to his face, thumbs over sharp cheekbones, and down his very fine, sculpted lips. “You have very aristocratic features, from what I’ve felt. I’ve studied other sculptures since I was a boy, all sorts… any kind I could get my hands on.”

Hannibal's bronze skin reddened at the feather light, yet professional attention from Will. He'd never let another touch him in such a way, be it in this manner or otherwise. He was thankful that his blush could not been seen though surely his skin was growing warmer. "Do I? Thank you, Will," he said, taking it as a very high compliment. "Ah, forgive me, I suppose I should remain silent for now as you feel out your subject."

“It’s fine,” Will said, his gaze was set ahead of him, not on Hannibal, as his fingers sought out every last detail. Thumbs spread over his brow and then his eyelids, taking in the depth. Hannibal was masculine, that much Will could tell for certain. “Is it too hot in here for you? I can open a window.”

"No, I am alright, but I appreciate the courtesy," Hannibal answered, almost a whisper. He didn't want to give Will a reason to remove his hands, and cleared his throat to compose himself with his eyes still closed. The doctor tried to imagine how life was for the exquisite sculptor, and let himself take in every sound, feel, and scent of the man whose hands were on him.

“Just let me know,” Will replied, doing one last sweep of Hannibal whole cranium, and then felt his way to the premade bust, and started to add on bit of clay here and there, rounding out the head portion from what he’d felt, and then added a bit to the shoulders as well. “Do you wear suits often?”

Hannibal all but mourned the loss of Will's hands on his skin but made no indication of such and opened his eyes as his heart beat a bit faster. "Thank you. I will do that," he said, and watched as the man began working on the bust. "Generally speaking, yes. I enjoy indulging in such pleasures."

“I’m sure you’re quite handsome in them,” Will insisted, and his hands now deep in clay, dirty with it, but his fingers and palms worked quickly to get the right dimensions. Most sculptures used visuals to get everything exactly, but Will used his touch. “I apologize now, I will have to touch you with my dirty hands now and then to get everything angled up right.”

"Thank you, and you will hear no complaints from me, Will," Hannibal promised, a faint hint of a flirtatious lilt to his tone as he smiled. He leaned over to touch the sculptors shoulder gently. "Would you mind if I remove my vest and shirt, so that no clay accidentally get onto the fabric before we continue?"

Will turned his attention to the direction of Hannibal’s touch, warmth spreading through him.“If you’re comfortable with that, it might be best,” Will commented with a smile, adding in clay for the ears, just globs at the moment, but he’d shape them in a bit.

Hannibal hummed his response and then stood, not uncomfortable, even if Will could see. He undid the vest and removed it, following with his shirt next, walking over to place them with his suit jacket. He back down, toros now totally bare and leaned forward for easier reach. "There, nothing to worry about now."

“What cologne is that you wear?” Will asked once Hannibal was in wafting distance once more, unable to get enough. He reached over, leaned in front of Hannibal to touch his ears, feeling them out carefully.

There was something almost primitive, and animalistic about the experience; being shirtless, hot and feeling the earth rubbing over his skin as Will took his measurements. It was entirely decadent. "It unfortunately has no name, I chose the mixture of scents myself and have a special blend made and shipped to me from Florence," Hannibal explained, likewise taking in Will's scent and gazing at him with rapt attention. "I hope it is not too overpowering."

“It’s spicy and sweet all at once,” Will mentioned, sliding his fingers down Hannibal’s jaw and then went back to molding the facial shape, and then the ears, taking up various tools, detailed as he could be. “I like it. It’s… distinctly you.”

"I'm pleased to hear it," Hannibal rasped, his throat clicking audibly as he swallowed. He felt a strain in his trousers, realizing he was growing half hard, so he crossed a leg over the other, despite knowing it wouldn't be seen. It was more to try to stifle it, if nothing else. "I need not tell you how striking and memorable you are, Will. I'm sure you hear it often."

“Says the man who saw me stark naked for the very first time on meeting me just last night,” Will teased, working his hands over the facial shape of the bust, curving and carving out Hannibal elegant cheekbones. “Just the same, thank you…”

Hannibal laughed, quietly, and briefly, finding Will all too alluring. "You're welcome. If it makes you feel more comfortable, I was looking at you with an artistic eye," he playfully remarked, and then leaned a bit closer. "At least most of the time."

“Weren’t they all?” Will raised a brow as he worked, details now and molding for lips and nose, not much there yet, but he was getting the placements just right.

"I wouldn't presume to know, as I was unable to look anywhere else but at you," Hannibal crooned, watching Will's every move. The work itself was almost as hypnotic as the sculptor himself. "I enjoy watching your technique. Perhaps one day I will try my own hand at sculpting, though it is quite different from the work I did as a surgeon and do now when I sketch."

Will flushed with a duck of his head, swallowing once. “You use a scalpel, it’s not much different than cutting into someone, or carving them open,” Will suggested, almost gruesomely.

Hannibal arched a barely there brow at that, a dark look playing on his features that he knew Will would not see while also observing the delightful flush on the man's face. "I suppose that is true. You speak like someone who has done so himself. Tell me, do you hunt or fish, Will?" he asked, with a slow, barely audible lick of his lips.

“I do both,” Will admitted. “I enjoy the serenity of fishing, being out in the water, listening to the roll of rapids, the sounds of the birds.” Hunting was a little more difficult for Will, but he had his hand at it now and then anyway.

"The quiet of the stream clears your mind..." Hannibal surmised, wondering how it felt for Will when he gutted a fish or perhaps a deer. He pictured him there, bloody, with a different sort of prey, feeling the thrill of the hunt in a way Hannibal would never be able to. "It sounds peaceful indeed."

“It is,” Will insisted, taking a step back toward Hannibal to feel his face once more. “I’m afraid this is where it gets a little messy for you.” Bits of wet and dried clay stuck to Will’s fingers and then Hannibal’s skin. “At least you’re not a dog or cat, that’s harder to get out of their fur.”

Hannibal chuckled at that, his bare chest heaving slightly with anticipation to feel Will's touch, even a messy one. He took the opportunity to look at the sculptor as he neared and then once again, closed his eyes to relish the sensation to the fullest. "Thankfully no, however, I am not opposed to being a little dirty, now and again."

“I’ll try not to get it all over,” Will said, quieter, listening to the way Hannibal breathed as he touched him, any excuse now, really.

"My clothing is safe, save for my pants and I do not imagine you will be touching anywhere near there," Hannibal murmured, opening his eyes after saying that to search Will's face for any sort of reaction. He found himself staring intently on the red plush pillows of the man's mouth, which made him lick his lips again.

“I… haven’t honestly sculpted below the waist before,” Will admitted, a rosy pink tint to his cheeks. “That would be quite a challenge…”

Hannibal grinned, dark maroon eyes roving over every inch of Will's face, to his ears and back. "I assume that would depend on the person you were using as your subject," he chuckled, and then still himself again.

Will smiled slightly at that, his hands stilling. “Are… are you flirting with me, Doctor?”

"And if I was, how would that make you feel, Will?" Hannibal asked, his tone deepening as he inhaled through his nose and waited.

“Flattered,” Will replied immediately, smiling dripping from his tone. “Most people stop bothering once they realize I’m blind.”

"In that case then yes, I must confess I am most certainly flirting with you," Hannibal said, honestly, and leaned forward a bit more still. "Anyone who would stop for that reason is very rude indeed. Your lack of sight does not define you nor does it make you any less alluring or interesting."

Will swallowed, visibly. “Thank you,” he whispered, having not been in the situation where he was mixing business with pleasure, even if pleasure hadn’t been had just yet. He could

feel Hannibal’s breath nearing though, could feel the magnetism that pulled them together.

Hannibal's breath hitched in his throat, as nodded, and then whispered back, getting achingly close. "You're welcome, Will."

The door jingled open and Will lifted his head, standing straight again. A brunette walked in, rosy cheeked and holding on to a few books. “Dad?”

“Just back here. I’m with a client,” Will called to her, and she wandered over, biting her bottom lip.

“Sorry, didn’t know.” She gave a little wave to Hannibal and excused herself to the small kitchenette toward the back.

“She’s adopted,” Will blurted out to Hannibal. “Her father killed her mother when she was twelve, and then himself, and tried to kill her, too. I... took her in.”

Hannibal, having smiled at the girl, looked over at Will as he spoke and processed this new knowledge. The man was simply full of surprises. "Very kind of you, Will," he said, acting as if nothing had almost just happened. "A tragic thing to happen to anyone, much more to a girl so young."

“She’s in college now. Refuses to stop coming by because she’s worried about me,” Will chuckled, one hand out to touch Hannibal’s shoulder, to be sure he was still there. “She doesn’t live with me. Stays the night sometimes, but mostly she’s in the dorms.”

The doctor looked at Will's hand on his shoulder and smiled, resisting the urge to place his own atop it or to pull the man against his body. "Ah, to be young again," he chuckled back, not moving away from the contact. "What is she studying?"

“Oddly enough, psychology,” Will answered, his free hand feeling out the bust once more, to get back to work, fingers slipping off Hannibal’s shoulder for now. “Her father did a number on her. I think she wants to figure out why he was how he ended up.”

"Perhaps I could be of some help in that regard, should she want it and you would allow me to," Hannibal offered, his gaze back on Will's hands. "I can only hope she does not blame herself."

“She did a lot of therapy with Alana,” Will answered, back on Hannibal’s ears, perfecting them. “I assume that’s how you know Alana, anyway, outside of her art classes.”

"It is, yes, and I am relieved that your daughter was in capable hands," Hannibal answered in agreement. He thought to himself that he could study Will for hours and never grow bored. "I served a sort of mentor for her, or so she states."

“I wouldn’t be surprised,” Will said, “I take it you know Margot then?” Will got one ear done and then worked on the other, using one hand to make sure they were even and precise.

"Yes, we have met on more than one occasion," Hannibal said, flattered at the compliment from Will, though he didn't call it out. The shift had been made once Will's daughter had

interrupted. "Are you two friendly as well?"

“Now and then. I’ve known Alana since I adopted Abigail. They’ve invited us to dinner a few times,” Will said, trying to steady the beating of his heart. He hadn’t honestly been with anyone in a long time, his last relationship with Matthew had ended on a rocky note.

"Once upon a time she would join me for dinner, though I've been busy as of late. I have a fondness for the culinary arts as well," Hannibal explained, letting his eyes drift over to Will's carotid artery. He smiled when he noticed the way it was pulsing faster than normal. "Would it be forthcoming if I invited you over to dinner one night? I would love to cook for you and you could bring your daughter as well, if you wish?"

“She’s pretty busy, wouldn’t want to bother with us old folk,” Will teased, who was hardly much older than thirty himself. “I would love to come over for dinner. Perhaps when I’ve finished your sculpture? I can deliver it.”

Chuckling, Hannibal's eyes crinkled at the corners, warmth and delight in his words. "Better we keep it the two of us then," he agreed, which is what he'd wanted anyways. "I would like that very much. However, I could pick you up if you'd like? It would not be any inconvenience or simply await your arrival."

“I wouldn’t want to put you out,” Will said, finishing the ears, he gestured Hannibal closer so he could put his hands on his face once more.

Hannibal moved the chair up a bit, and leaned forward. "It would be of no imposition, I can assure you," he promised, taking Will in up close. His own heart began to beat faster again at the proximity. "You would be giving me the pleasure of your company."

Hannibal’s breath played close to Will’s skin, making goosebumps raise up over his arms. He felt out the doctor’s face with his fingers, mostly his nose with a wry grin. “Keep distracting me and I’ll get finished with this.” Will licked his lips. “A ride would be wonderful. I don’t drive, obviously.”

"Am I distracting you, my apologies, Will. I had not noticed," Hannibal grinned, his face lifting as he did. After gazing lustfully at the sweep of tongue over those luscious lips, the doctor saw the goosebumps. He wondered in what other ways he might push the model's buttons later to reveal new decadent reactions. "Shall I pick you up from here, whenever you close for the day, then?"

“Unless you want to drive to Wolftrap to get me,” Will said, moving back a space to shape the nose, gathering a tool in his hand and working meticulously, but with skilled fingers.

"Far, yes, but not overly so," Hannibal said, filing away where Will lived, for later. He sat back in his chair and continued to watch between the sculptor's hands and his face. "What time should I arrive? I unfortunately did not catch the closing time on the door when we entered earlier."

“I close whenever I want to. I don’t hold classes most days of the week, so any time after four,” Will answered. “Would this be a date?”

"That is my hope, yes," Hannibal answered, without any hesitation. He reached out to touch Will's arm reassuringly, making sure not to mess up what he was doing. "But if not, it can merely be a friendly supper. I will come for you at half past four, if it suits you."

Will startled a little from the touch, face turning as though to look at Hannibal, but their eyes never met. “No, it’s fine. I… haven’t dated in a while. I don’t want to be nervous.”

"Nor have I," Hannibal answered, moving his hand and placing it on his lap as he looked at Will's face. "Then think of it as a tentative date. See how the night progresses of its own accord."

Will smiled, turning back to his work, wetting his bottom lip with his tongue once. “I have enjoyed your company so far, I can’t see why it couldn’t be a date.”

"It's settled then," the doctor smiled, which came through his voice as he spoke. He felt a bit of clay drying on his face and idly he lifted his hand to brush it off. It did nothing to distract him from tempting way the other man licked his lip. "And I have enjoyed yours, immensely, Will."

Will smiled, ducking his head a little, curls falling into his eyes, though he didn’t notice beyond the touch of them against his face. He worked for a few more hours with Hannibal, getting everything just right, and the rest he would work on when he was so thoroughly encompassed by the doctor and his chatting. Finally, they parted ways for the day so Will could get in a moment with Abigail, and told Hannibal the sculpture would be done in two days, he could have their dinner then.

Chapter 2

Chapter by 11Mydesign11, AchillesLament (11Mydesign11), Destinyawakened

The days seemed to drag by, but Hannibal kept busy, though his thoughts always seemed to drift back to Will. Finally it was time to pick him up, and the dinner was left covered on the counter since he knew it would not be long before they would be back.

After checking on his appearance once more in the mirror, for himself more than anything else, he smoothed down his cream colored, double breasted suit and headed off to pick up Will.

Fifteen minutes later and he arrived, parking and exiting the Bentley to go to the studio. The bell rang upon entering and he scanned the room for his beautiful date. "Will?"

Will turned from the window, toward Hannibal, and smiled. “Hey,” he said, and used his hands to guide him through the room, having moved a few things with Abigail, he had to get used to the layout again. “Would you mind helping me with the bust? I don’t want to drop it. It’s just in the back.”

Hannibal went with Will, lips twitching into an unseen smile. "Hello and no, I would not mind at all," he said, letting the sculptor lead him. Only a minute in his presence and he was utterly under his thrall once more. "You've been hard at work it seems since I was last here."

“My newest client demands a lot of attention to his sculpture,” Will teased, taking Hannibal’s hand with his free one, leading him back. He reached out on the counter and found the bust, now hollowed out and fired, it was perfect, to Hannibal’s very likeness, or so Will hoped.

Hannibal chuckled, enjoying the feel of Will's hand in his and was about to make a joke back, when he saw the sculpture. His breath hitched and a wide smile spread over his features. "Will, this is..." he trailed off, running his fingers over the details. "Exquisite, sheer perfection. You captured my appearance down to the finest point."

“I was worried about your eyes. I don’t know if they’re right, they were the hardest,” Will admitted, but loved getting that feedback feeling from his clients, able to truly tell Hannibal loved it.

"You captured the shape of them beautifully," Hannibal complemented, realizing he was still holding his hand. He didn't pull away, and instead rubbed his thumb over the skin he found there. He knew the sculptor never had sight, but decided to describe the color of his eyes by using items Will could relate to them. "My eyes, I've been told are amber, like honey or golden, much like the sun. Others, however, have said they take on a more maroon cast in certain lights. I am truly in awe of your work, Will."

Will turned his head toward the sound of Hannibal’s voice, grinning at him with perfectly straight, white teeth. “First off, I only know the taste of honey, and I’m not certain what maroon looks like either, a plum?” He squeezed Hannibal’s hand. “You are quite full of yourself. I hope you like your sculpture, Doctor Lecter.”

Hannibal chuckled and then squeezed Will's hand once before letting it go to lift the sculpture. "Yes, a plum is an accurate description," he said, still softly chuckling. He adored the man's humor and the hint of sass there. "We should all be proud of what or who we are. In any case, I am enthralled with it and may call me Hannibal if it would please you."

“Hannibal,” Will said, even if he was just being facetious before. He touched the wall and lead Hannibal back out to the door, flipping the lights out as he went, holding the door. Winston was not with him today.

"Thank you, Will," Hannibal said, his tone friendly and pleased as he walked out of the studio. He wouldn't have minded Winston coming, since he was behaved and Will's helper, but admittedly he was thankful it truly would be just the two of them. "I am parked in the first space, next to the tree."

Will locked up and then laughed, shaking his head. “How many steps? I can’t see the tree, and there are a few around here, too many to know which you mean.” Will knew which, of course, but listening to the other man scramble was genuinely fun.

Hannibal shook his head to himself in return, smiling and then thought he would play back. "I'm not sure, perhaps you should hold on to me, just to be certain I get you there in one piece, hm?"

Will reached out and took Hannibal’s arm, curling his fingers around his bicep. “Okay, this once I’ll let you lead me.”

"Just this once," Hannibal agreed, loving the feel of Will around his bicep. He lead the sculptor to the Bentley and gently placed the bust into the trunk in the box he had ready there with packing. After that, he opened the door for him and smiled, touching his shoulder. Being playful, he leaned in a bit closer. "Here we are, safe and sound."

“My hero,” Will crooned lightly, and settled into the car, buckling himself in.

Hannibal grinned at that, and closed the door, walking around to get in. He started the car with a push of the button and buckled in. "Please do not forget to tell me how much I owe you for your beautiful work," he said as he backed out and headed towards his home. "You have satisfied me greatly."

“You’ll get a bill in the mail,” Will said, with a small grin, as he took in the scent of Hannibal car, listening to the soft rumble of the engine. “Luxury car?” Will ran his fingers over the leather seats and the sides of the door, and then the dash in front of him with the wood trim. “Yeah, luxury.”

"Yes, a Bentley," Hannibal said, looking over at Will's hands, then his face, with a smile. He turned right onto the road he lived on, his eyes focusing back on the road. "I enjoy certain indulgences. Life is meant to be savored, like a fine wine."

“You’re lucky to afford them,” Will said, sitting back with his eyes closed, as if that helped him enjoy the smooth ride and quiet engine.

"Perhaps I am lucky for many reasons," Hannibal said, looking over and thinking that while he did not entirely believe in luck, he was happy to be in the company of Will Graham.

“Is that so?” Will asked, head canted as though trying to hear better for Hannibal’s answer as a smile played across his lips.

"Mhm," Hannibal answered, a playful, deep timber to his tone as he pulled into his driveway, gravel crunching beneath his tire. It soon gave way to silence when he drove over the smooth concrete of his garage and shut off the engine. "We have arrived."

Will felt for the door handle and then pried it open, pushing the door out, he stepped booted feet onto the smooth drive, and carefully pulled himself up to standing. Shutting the door, he felt around the car, listening intently for where they might be. A garage, okay. “Are there stairs?”

Hannibal, leaving the bust in the trunk for now, walked over to Will. He didn't offer his arm, but pulled out his keys instead. "There are two, at this door, and four at the front," he said, key jingling in his hand, the other in his pocket. "It is to your left."

“Lead, I’ll follow,” Will insisted, listening for Hannibal’s cues he was leaving, and feeling out his environment as they walked.

"Of course," Hannibal said, and then walked began walking towards the stairs, making sure to say when he'd reached them. He opened the door and disarmed the security, waiting for Will to join him inside so he could lock the door.

Right behind Hannibal, Will held out one hand to steady himself against the wall, as not to fall or run into Hannibal. “A security system? I don’t even have that at the studio.”

"One can never be too careful," Hannibal said and locked the door behind them. He walked around Will, letting his fingers slightly skate over his side as he did before stopping a few paces in front. "Dinner is prepared and the dining room is just up ahead."

“Okay,” Will answered with a little smile, and started to count his paces. “Tell me when to stop or turn, I’m counting so I can remember when I’m here again.”

"Very good," Hannibal grinned, delighting that Will said 'when he would be there again' and walked back to the table. With a smile still in place, he waited in front of the chair, putting his keys on the table with a clink. "It is straight ahead, when you reach me, you are there."

Will counted each step, his hand out until he touched Hannibal once more, memorizing the path. “Thank you,” he said. “Big house?”

"Some would say it is, yes. Three floors, six bedrooms and three and half bathrooms," Hannibal answered, smoothly and then stepped to the side to pull the chair out for Will. "Please, have a seat and I'll bring dinner. Would you like some wine?"

Will felt around for the chair and then slid down into the seat of it. “Sure,” he said, a little surprised at the house. “Are all the bedrooms filled?” he asked, teasingly.

Hannibal turned around, towards Will and chuckled, deciding to tease back. "Yes, they each house a different model from one of my classes. I do hope you all will learn to get along." He moved over to get the wine, and brought back two glasses with it, filling them up before setting them down at table. "One room is for guests, one for sketching, and then I have a study plus my own bedroom. Only two to spare."

“Get many guests?” Will asked, touching the glass where he heard it placed before him. He brought it carefully to his nose, smelling it. “A red of some kind?”

"Merlot, yes and no, not many," Hannibal answered, sitting in at the head of the table while the food heated. He sniffed it and then took a slow tentative sip, letting it bathe his tongue before he swallowed. "Occasionally my sister, Mischa, will pay me a visit. As such one of the spare rooms is also done to suit her tastes."

“Ah, you have a sister,” Will smiled at that and tasted the fragrant wine, slowly letting it sit on his palette for a moment and then swallowed. “This is very good.”

"I do, she is a few years younger and quite a strong willed woman," Hannibal said, smiling fondly as he thought of his sister and all they had endured. He watched the bob of Will’s adam’s apple and licked his lips. "I am pleased you find it to your liking. I enjoy wine, among a few other spirits."

“I drink whiskey mostly,” Will commented, and took another sip and then gently set the glass down, making sure to get it far up on the table. “Dinner smells wonderful.”

Hannibal made a mental note of that and set his glass down as well. "Thank you, Will," he smiled and then excused him to go bring out their food.

A moment later he came back and sat Will's down before him. "Braised Roast baked in clay with marrow, and Lady Apples on the side," he announced, sitting down once more as he waited for the sculptor to take a bite first. “I thought it fitting for our first date.”

A smile reached Will’s eyes, though dim as they were still. He leaned over the food to smell it properly, and then picked up the fork at the side, and tentatively took a bite. He hummed. “Your reputation holds true.”

The elegant doctor smiled widely at that, his fork in hand. "I was not aware Alana spoke of such. However, I am grateful for it," Hannibal beamed, his joy more than apparent in his tone. He took a slow bite, savoring it. "Admittedly, I would enjoy seeing you prepare this dish. One can only imagine the masterful way in which you would mold the clay in preparation."

Will chuckled, taking another bite and then chewed, swallowed. He licked his lips. “I’m a terrible cook, but maybe next time I can help.”

"You teach me to sculpt, I can show you how to cook, if you'd like," Hannibal offered, and then took another bite, following it with wine. He loved looking over and seeing Will with him.

“Teach you? I do offer classes,” Will said with a little smirk, and sipped wine after another bite, enjoying how well the pairing went together. “Private lessons will cost you more,” he flirted.

Hannibal narrowed his eyes seductively, even if it wouldn't be seen and rubbed his thumb over his jaw. "I am a man of means, and would spare no expense for such close attentiveness from the sculpting Master himself," he flirted back and took another bite. "I prefer a truly one on one, hands on experience."

“Studio or home lessons?” Will asked, taking another bite, starved, as he often forgot to feed himself when he got busy. “Mind you if you pick home lessons, you’ll need to set up for it.”

"Home," Hannibal answered, decidedly, sipping his wine and taking another almost delicate bite. He had a very basic knowledge of the tools needed but would gladly procure everything

ahead of time. "I would have every thing that would be needed before the lesson."

“I’ll have a list made up for you,” Will said, setting his fork down, his dinner gone. He picked at the slices of apples, biting into one with a hum. “Dinner is great, Hannibal.”

"Thank you, on both accounts," Hannibal smiled, finishing his as well, and gingerly wiping his mouth with the soft linen napkin. He took a moment to admire how beautiful Will's eyes looked in the soft lighting. "Would you like more wine or a whiskey?"

“The wine is fine,” Will said, not sure that he’d finished the first glass, he brought it to his lips to take the last few sips.

Hannibal watched and once Will set it down, he reached over, his fingers brushing. "Allow me, then," he said, and then refilled both of their glasses. "Would you like to enjoy our wine by the fire?"

“Yeah,” Will said, letting Hannibal take his glass, and then stood slowly, fingers on the table. “Which direction?”

"To your right," Hannibal said and rose from the table, collecting the plates. "I am going to take the dishes, but there is nothing in the path ahead of you, save for one table to the left."

“Thanks,” Will said, pushing off from the table and heading right, turning himself to do so. He counted the steps there, too, one hand out to catch himself or feel for a wall if one became present. He made his way slowly to the next room and felt around each table, shuffling along until he felt the warmth from the hearth and his feet hit the couch. He took a seat, listening to every sound, from the crackle of the fireplace, to the ticking of the grandfather clock likely in the corner.

Once Hannibal had put away the dishes, he walked into the sitting room, and stoked the fire before joining Will on the couch with the refilled glasses of wine in hand. He looked over, offering the other man his glass, carefully, and smiled. "I find sitting by the fire after a meal brings me back to times of old. A place suspended in history, where we gathered near the hearth to share moments with our loved ones."

“I wish I could say I had memories of that,” Will said, glad to feel Hannibal’s warmth on the other side of him, cradled in the feeling, he felt full and sated. He took the glass pressed into his hand, sipping the wine.

"Perhaps you'll soon have some, and then you can recall them fondly," Hannibal offered, his body angling towards Will's as he sipped from the crystal in his hand.

“I might have a few memories with Abigail, the dogs, but nothing so long ago,” Will said, taking another sip, his free hand reaching out to see just how close Hannibal was, able to feel his heat radiate near. His fingers grazed over glassy buttons of Hannibal’s vest, flitting up to his tie. “Was I under dressed for dinner?”

Hannibal hummed his understanding, and then watched as Will's reached out, exploring with his deft fingers. "Not at all," he assured, the words coming out in a silky rumble. He placed

his hand gently over his date's, lightly, and traced his thumb over the skin. "You look quite handsome, in fact."

“I wouldn’t know,” Will whispered taking a larger sip of his wine and then reached to set it down next to him at the little end table he’d felt when he first came in. He curled his fingers into Hannibal’s vest, angling his head up toward the direction he felt his breath coming from.

Setting his down without moving away, Hannibal felt his pulse quicken. He moved forward still, letting Will feel more the distance closing as his other hand gently cupped his strong jaw. "Then I hope you will take my word. As I mentioned the other day, I have an eye for the rare and beautiful..."

“I trust you’d not lie to me,” Will whispered back with quickened breath of his own, hand sliding over Hannibal’s shoulder to wrap his arm around them, pulling them closer.

"You can trust me," Hannibal murmured, and brushed their lips together, softly, a hardly detectable hitch of breath catching in his throat as he felt the plush contact. He wanted to relish, commit the image, in detail, to the highest halls of his memory.

Will’s own breath caught as their lips met, a spark coiling right down his spine, tightening with each beat of his heart that only seemed to speed up. His hand dropped to Hannibal’s neck, holding the back of his head as he slotted their mouths together, pressing closer.

Hannibal slid his hand back from Will's jaw to the back of his head as well, sweeping his tongue between his lips in a plea for entry. In his mind, he heard a quiet symphony beginning to resound to the cadence of their burgeoning connection as his skin began to blaze with the fires of his lust.

“Hannibal…” Will whispered once before delving back in, more heated this time as he let all his senses take control, pulling Hannibal over his smaller form.

"Will," Hannibal said, his tone muffled as he deepened the kiss, positioning himself between Will's thighs. He suckled Will's tongue, hungrily, bracketing his head with a forearm on either side.

Will took in every taste and sound from Hannibal, putting them to etching them into his memory, something he was sure he’d never forget. He groaned, one foot on the ground to accommodate Hannibal’s body as he bit and sucked on his lower lip.

Hannibal pulled back, to allow them the opportunity to catch their breath. He stared into blue eyes that couldn't look back, caressing Will's face reverently. "Stunningly perfect," he whispered, and then went back in, even more aggressively to contrast the softness of his words as his hips began to roll down.

Hannibal’s cologne turned musky as their bodies heated up together, hot coals burning in Will’s core as their groins rolled and ground together with a quickening pace. Will’s fingers undid Hannibal’s tie, and then a few buttons, long digits skating over his throat to feel his pulse as their hearts quickened.

The doctor removed his vest, and then in turn undid a few buttons of Will's flannel, kissing from his succulent lips down the long column of his throat. "Delicious, Will," he breathed against his neck, teeth scraping lightly. "Tell me what you feel, and see, in your mind's eye when I taste you..."

“Feels like shock waves against my skin, heating me through,” Will whispered roughly, fingers tangling in Hannibal’s hair. “I imagine the way I feel your lips when I sculpted them, touching me, but warmer. Luscious.”

"Beautiful," Hannibal rasped, and undid a few more of Will's button's, kissing down between his smooth, muscular pecs as he grunted with a snap of his hips. The doctor’s cock was painfully hard, and pressing against the fine fabric of his trousers, precome leaking from the tip. "Entirely decadent."

Will dropped a hand between them to undo Hannibal’s fly, button popping undone, he reached in grabbed the doctor’s cock out, a low groan escaping his chest at the girth in his palm. Slowly, Will started to stroke him, feeling every ridge and vein of uncut length. “Maybe I will sculpt you…”

A low growl of pleasure slipped past Hannibal's shapely lips and into Will's mouth, where he kissed again and pumped his hips. He finished undoing the sculptor's shirt, and then his own, removing the tie, so that they were both nude from the waist up as he then moved to open the other's pants. "I would never turn down the opportunity to feel your very skilled hands on my body."

Will shuddered at the way Hannibal’s voice lilted over the word ‘body’. He stroked faster, skilled hands taking their time to feel every inch but were also perfectly capable. His free hand pressed up against Hannibal’s chest, fingers dragging through the bed of hair there. “You are perfect.”

"As are you," Hannibal moaned, nipping at Will's lips as he reached into the man's pants and wrapped his hand around his cock. The doctor’s other arm hooked around under and around the other’s torso, holding him close as he ran his hot tongue from shoulder to lobe. "Ah, William-"

Gasping, Will rocked his palm harder against Hannibal’s cock, fisting him faster, thumbing over the wet tip, body writhing under the other man, as if being played like a instrument and Hannibal was the only one who knew the chords.

Hannibal's breath kissed Will's ear as his teeth worried the velvety lobe, his hand twisting and gliding back and forth to match his rhythm. His pants fell a bit as he thrust in the man's hand, ass muscles flexing and hair falling unkempt into his dark lust blown eyes. "Yes, just like that-"

Words escaped Will as he worked Hannibal over, faster and then slower, squeezing at the base and working his way to the top once more, over and over. His own hips pushed into Hannibal’s palm cock leaking as his body dared to threaten a spillage so soon.”I’m-”

"Come," Hannibal groaned, kiss walking to Will's lips as his hips snapped faster and palm ground into the smaller of the two's cock relentlessly. Seeing that he was nearing his release, the doctor took it as permission to let go of what he'd been holding back. Stars burst behind his eyes, body stuttering violently as warm milky fluid spurted from the tip and over Will's fist. "Will-!"

Feeling Hannibal fall apart, his hand coated in warmth, Will tumbled right after, spilling as his chest heaved and his head lolled back, groaning into the air. Once he caught his breath, he pulled Hannibal's mouth against his once more, slowly milking every last drop from the Doctor.

Hannibal caught his body from falling with his arm and grunted, kissing Will languidly as they rode out the waves of their release. He pulled away only to bring his hand to mouth and lick every last drop of the other man's spend from his finger, savoring his taste. "You taste as good as you feel."

"You licked it off?" Will chuckled, lightly, and then did the same, trying to make a show of it as he licked every bit from his fingers and palms. He smiled. "I hope that looked as sexy as I thought it did."

"Allow me to put your mind at ease," Hannibal murmured, a smile in his tone as he placed both hands on Will's face and kissed him heatedly, pressing his body down into him. His heart beat hard all over again, the thudding vibrating through to the sculptor's. "It was entirely alluring, and only makes me want to feast on you more."

"You're a perfect dessert," Will whispered between shared breath, hands roaming down over Hannibal's shoulders and back, to his ass, memorizing the feel, wanting to remember, very sincere on what he said earlier.

"A sweet yet guilty pleasure, only to be enjoyed on occasion?" Hannibal grinned over Will's mouth, and then rubbed their noses together softly as he shuddered a breath when Will explored his body.

"Only on occasion?" Will asked, whisper soft, smiling against Hannibal's mouth as he bit his bottom lip once. His hands cupped Hannibal's perfect ass, squeezing gently. "I may have to sculpt your ass first…"

"Preferably more than occasionally," Hannibal answered, groaning quietly at the feel of Will's teeth on his lip and hands on his ass. "Perhaps you will need to continue mapping my body with your hands, to be certain..."

"I am utterly besotted with you," Will admitted, palming down Hannibal's ass once more, then up his spine, feeling every bump and curve. "I'm glad you sought me out, Hannibal."

"And I you, immensely," the Doctor admitted back, stroking an errant curl from Will's brow and then kissed under his jaw to his swollen lips twice. "From the moment I saw you, I was enchanted and knew that I simply had to know you, Will."

“I wish I believed in things like fate,” Will mused, turning his face a little into Hannibal’s touch, however softly.

"Be it fate or circumstance, I am merely elated that our paths crossed and lead us here," Hannibal offered, taking in Will's beauty again as the shared the intimacy by the crackling fire.

Will’s hands slid back up and then cupped the doctor’s face, gently, leaning up to kiss him reverently. “I could listen to you talk all day. Everything you say is… poetic.”

"If I am a poet, you the muse that inspires me as no other before," Hannibal smiled, letting Will feel it over his mouth as they kissed softly. "Would it be over eager or presumptuous to state that I am already planning our next date together?"

“No,” Will whispered, between soft kisses and touches to Hannibal’s lips and jaw, his brow and eyes, taking in every curve and feature once more, and different they were in this relaxed, intimate state. “You’re a welcomed distraction from my boring life.”

"I will gladly distract you, any time you may wish," Hannibal whispered back, loving the attention and affection. He was willingly tumbling into the sea, drowning in everything that was Will Graham and gladly surrendered. "I had hoped you might find me as interesting, as I do you, Will."

“I feel there are hidden compartments to you, Doctor, and I’ve just started to find them,” Will replied, hooking a leg over Hannibal’s hip to keep him there, slotted above him like a heavy, warm blanket.

"I will let you," Hannibal promised, and brushed the back of his knuckles over Will's cheekbone. It was beautiful that a man without sight was beginning to *see* him in a way that no other had ever before. "But you have to unlock them yourself."

“Do I get any hints as to where the keys may lay?” Will asked, smile growing by the seconds.

"One you have already found and possess," Hannibal grinned, referring to Will unlocking his heart with that key. He whispered the rest against the model's ear and nipped playfully. "The others come with time. What would the fun be if I gave away too much, hm?"

“A mystery then,” Will whispered back, hand dropping to Hannibal’s heart, knowingly.

"For the time being, only," the Doctor assured, noting the placement of Will's hand. "However, we all have our mysteries and wait for someone to come along to discover them, wouldn't you agree?"

“I suppose so,” Will said, thought he considered himself fairly open.

"Nonetheless, if there is anything you wish to know, you need only ask," Hannibal offered, carding through Will's impossibly soft curls.

“No, you clearly said I had to figure it all out,” Will said, pointedly. It meant Hannibal had things he wasn’t wanting to share, just yet, and Will didn’t want to prod his lion too quickly.

"That I did," Hannibal said, uncertain as to how Will would react when he did finally open all the compartments, which the doctor was confident he would. Would the man run or would he stay? While the older man hoped for the latter, he was curious to find out. One thing he knew for certain was he was growing more and more enamored with each moment that passed. "Would you like some more of your wine, then? Forgive me for not having moved yet, I find myself nearly unable to do so."

Will let it go, of course, and focused on the now instead. “Sure. Unless you don’t want to move.”

They'd reached a stalemate, for the time being, and that was okay, still new territory. "I do not want to, no, but it would be rude of me to keep you pinned down as you lie there and thirst," he chuckled and moved off, tucking his flaccid cock into his trousers. Hannibal refilled their wine and and sat with one leg crossed over the other.

Will did himself up, not sure where the rest of his clothes went, but he would sit in his jeans for now. He took the wine once more, skin glistening from their coupling. “Thank you. So, why did you become a doctor?”

Hannibal had made no move to put on his shirt either, warm enough from he and Will's moment, and the fire. "You're welcome," he said, watching the man closely. "I had an innate curiosity with how the body functioned, just as I do over the mind. It is fascinating."

“I’d be a terrible doctor,” Will chuckled, smiling into his glass, his free hand resting on Hannibal’s thigh. “Well, maybe not. So long as I wasn’t a practicing medicine.”

Chuckling back, Hannibal placed his hand over Will's, tracing the veins with his thumb. "A Doctor of the mind then?" he asked, sipping more of his wine. "Though I must admit I am rather charmed with the way you use your hands in your chosen trade."

“Maybe,” Will hummed as he took a sip. “Sculpting is about the only thing left I could do. As a child, I thought it might be fun to solve crimes, work for the FBI, all of that. My father let me down one day and said I was blind, that wouldn’t happen. So it didn’t.”

"Your empathy could be quite useful in that regard," Hannibal offered, imaging a different world where Will might have had sight. He wondered if they would have met under the same circumstances or something different entirely.

“Could have been,” Will shrugged, turning his hand so that he clasped Hannibal’s with his own.

Hannibal gently squeezed Will's hand, and laced their fingers together, taking another pull from his glass. "Do you find that you are you unfulfilled with your life?"

“I don’t know how to answer that. There are a great many things I’ll never experience, but having never had them anyway, how could I know if I’m missing out?” Will countered,

leaning his head back, eyes on the ceiling as they had nothing to focus on anyway.

"While that is true, I meant are you fulfilled with the things you do have and know," Hannibal offered, gently, and let his gaze trail up the long column of Will's exposed throat. Perhaps he was attempting to unlock a few compartments of his own.

“I have no reasons to dislike my life. Not many people can say they sculpt for a living, or get to fish on the weekends, or let stranger draw them in the nude,” Will added on with a small, noisy chortle, and then sighed. “In another world, perhaps I was something else, something more than this, but in this world, this is what I am.”

"I find who you are to be perfect," Hannibal said, the warm smile lilting his tone as he raised Will's hand to kiss it. "You have a peace in your life that most others only long for."

There were, just as Hannibal had, many compartments to Will Graham that he had yet let anyone else see. He hardly knew Hannibal, and his last relationship ended on a sour note, so Will was careful not to prod things too far yet. “Peace. Perhaps.”

It was the mysteries that Hannibal had been referring to earlier, they both had them and he could sense them in Will like a cool breeze on a dark and stormy night. All things in good time. "Yes," he said, and looked at Will over the rim of his glass as he swallowed down more. "We all strive for it, in one way or another. We totter around the labyrinth of our lives in search of its ripe sweetness."

“And you think I’ve got that?” Will asked, sipping more wine, gone now, he set the glass aside, his head buzzing with warmth.

"To a degree," Hannibal answered, finishing his as well and setting it down with a clink. "Peace is fleeting, it never lasts or stays, which is why many continue their quest."

Will hummed. “So, with my blindness, you believe I’m living a more peaceful life than I might have had otherwise?”

"I would imagine that not seeing some of the horrors that life can offer could lend itself to peace," Hannibal surmised, placing his other hand over Will's to sandwich it. "However, I would not wish to make assumptions when I have not been in your proverbial shoes and even those with sight have their own opinions on what is unpleasant to witness and what it not."

“Sight doesn’t make up the majority of the horrors the world offers,” Will replied, his chummy mood crumbling, knocked down a notch. “In fact, not being able to see can make everything frightful in the world that much more agonizingly horrible to bear witness to.”

Hannibal noticed the shift, and removed his hand to give Will some space if he needed it. "It was not my intention to make assumptions, Will, as I said," he reiterated, pursing his lips. "I merely admire your strengths. I know there are some that would pity or coddle those without sight and both of those are things, I will never do. Is it wrong of me to elevate you so?"

Will stood, furious, hands on his hips. He felt prodded and poked at, like a caged animal in a zoo. “Elevate me? You have demeaned my life by saying I must have it so good, that

everything must be amazing for me because I don’t have to see what you do.” Will paced, dangerously close to the fire. Huffing, he rubbed a hand over his face in realization. “You are goading me for your own clinical curiosity. Is that what all of this is?”

Hannibal stood, with a quick, smooth elegance, and stepped in front of the fireplace, making sure his movements were audible. He didn't touch Will, nor would he, but also wouldn't let the man be burned; he was far too lovely. "You are angry that I cannot perceive your life and deny me the chance to find keys to your compartments, when you wish for my own," he pointed out, calmly. "I am a psychiatrist and am always inquiring but it is not why I am interested in you. Just as I would not assume that you are *only* interested in me to, what was it? Cure your boredom."

“No harm comes from being bored,” Will whispered, taking a step back for space. “You assumed, you did not ask. Everyone does it though, I guess I thought you wouldn’t.” Will’s heel touched the couch once more and he bent, looking for his shirt, which he found and put it back on, buttoning it up.

"Then you were not listening when I clearly stated that I would not wish to make assumptions when I have not been in your shoes, Will," Hannibal reminded, growing a bit insulted at the insinuation. "You, in this very moment, are making assumptions about me. Perception is a tool that's pointed on both ends."

Will tugged his boots back on and then pulled out his phone, hitting just a single button on it. It was one that sent a text for someone to come get him at his location. “Perhaps we are just not hitting the right points tonight, Doctor Lecter.” Matthew was right, after all, Will was stubborn, and he could be just as ignorant as any other person with sight. Will didn’t want another relationship like that one, didn’t want it to end, didn’t want the heart ache all over again. He was better off alone, he knew that, and was stupid think this might actually be *something*.

"Are we no longer on a first name basis then?" Hannibal asked, frowning as he watched Will hit the button and put on his boots. However, despite the disappointment, the man's actions only proved his earlier point, the sculptor was strong, and had a quiet power that the doctor couldn't wait to bring out further. "This was not how I envisioned our first date, Will. I only wish to get to know you, just as you said you did me and the reason for that is I am quite fond of you."

“Be that as it may, I can’t do this. I don’t know who I was foolin’,” Will said, shaking his head. “I will only uproot your life. All the baggage that comes with me. I know my life seems simple to you, that my complaints of boredom must have insinuated as much, but I have worked to have it that way.” A shrill from his phone let him know a driver was going to be there in two minutes.

"Then you are *assuming* that I can not handle baggage, or that somehow I will be thrown down a well and into chaos. Is that not a decision I should make on my own? You are now trying to do the very thing that others do to you and yet I have not," Hannibal pointed out, stepping closer to Will. "You are running from what you want out of fear and trying to call it by another name.” He paused, hands in his pockets as he thought for a moment.

“Furthermore, I never implied that your life was simple, only that it seemed as though you had found your own brand of peace."

“I found what works for me. For now.” Will took a deep breath, able to smell the sweet, musky scent of Hannibal close to him, and it was for a brief moment the only he wanted to hide in. He’d already shown Hannibal some of his cracks on the polished surface of his life, and that was already too much. Overwhelmed, Will took a step back.“Thank you for dinner. I hope the sculpture is to your liking. Please don’t worry about payment, it was my pleasure.”

"Nonsense, I will pay you for your work, and it is beautiful, yes," Hannibal insisted, not at all pleased with things at the moment. He stepped back as well, his heart hurting though he didn't express it with tone or words. "You're welcome, Will and thank you for coming. Regardless, I hope you will let me call on you again, when you are able to stop running. You know where I am, and where you can always find or reach me."

“It’s a gift,” Will insisted, walking the steps back to the dining room, from there retracing them to the door. He undid the locks, hands shaking, and left.

Hannibal had silently followed after Will, watching him leave his house to make sure he got out alright. Once he was gone, it felt empty and cold, the doctor having planned to invite him to stay the night. He went back into his study with a glass of bourbon, going over the events of the night, a scowl on his elegant features.

Chapter 3

Chapter by 11Mydesign11, AchillesLament (11Mydesign11), Destinyawakened

Will arrived at Alana's next class as usual, despite who he knew would be there. He got there early, allowing Alana to help him to the pose for the class, everything well hidden this time with his knees and thighs mostly covering.

"How was your date with Hannibal?" she whispered, nudging him a little.

"It was fine," Will answered, and then went quiet as people started to settle in the room.

Hannibal walked into the classroom, and over to the pair, confidently. "Good evening, Will, and Doctor Bloom," he greeted, his satchel of supplies clutched in his hand. He'd made sure to wear the cologne that Will liked, naturally, and had also enjoyed just a bit of the wine they'd shared so that he would perhaps be able to trigger some sort of pleasant memory from the combination of scents.

“Hannibal,” Alana said with a smile and touched Will’s arm, leaving him, but not straying far.

Will was perfectly still, as not to ruin the position Alana wanted for the class. “Doctor Lecter,” Will said, quietly, senses overwhelmed with a need he couldn’t control at the very smell of the Hannibal.

"It is a pleasure," Hannibal said, quiet and deep, leaning in just a fraction. He let his eyes rove over Will's naked but somewhat covered form and swallowed, a need of his own stirring in his body. "Perhaps after class, I could have a moment of your time?"

Will flushed, quivering slightly as he all but felt Hannibal’s eyes on him. “Of course,” he replied politely, and Alana started to ask everyone to sit so they could get started.

"Thank you," Hannibal smiled, and briefly touched Will's arm so that everyone could see they had a special, intimate connection. At Alana’s request, the doctor turned, and walked over to sit at his desk, his eyes on Will and no one else.

A frown settled over Will’s features, but no one seemed to notice. Time went by quickly for that hour, and at the end, everyone dispersed once again. Alana helped Will into his robe once more and he grabbed his sweat pants from her, putting them on.

Hannibal gathered his things and walked over to Will once he saw he’d gotten dressed. "Would you prefer to speak here or in the privacy of my car?" he asked, once Alana had stepped away.

“Is it *that* sort of conversation?” Will asked, hands in his robe pockets, feet in boots once more. To most he’d look ridiculous, but Will clearly didn’t care too much.

The Doctor paid no mind to what Will was wearing and instead focused on him. "That depends on your definition," he chuckled, quietly, and wet his lips. "I merely wish to speak with you about the other night. I did not like the note on which we parted, Will. We may have that conversation here, or in a more discrete location. That is up to you."

“I haven’t a choice one way or the other, do I?” Will sighed, taking the steps to the door, knowing Hannibal would follow. “Private is best in that case.”

"You always have a choice," Hannibal said, and walked after Will just as had been predicted, heading out the exit to the parking lot. "But yes, I would have to agree that private is best. I’m parked next to the door."

Will walked out, reaching for the rail of the stairs, and then down the steps where his ride would usually be parked, but he hadn’t called it yet. “Here?” Will asked, touching the door, recognizing the handle.

"Yes," Hannibal answered, disarming and unlocking the car with his remote. He walked over to the other side and got into the driver's seat. Once Will was in, he angled his body towards him and took a breath. "I would like to ask you to reconsider seeing me again, Will, and likewise apologize for being intrusive. It is merely in my nature."

“I… don’t know,” Will started, hands in his lap, holding them over his thighs. “I’m not sure I’m ready to date anyone again.”

"Ah, I see," Hannibal said, looking at Will's hands and then out the window. "Surely this is not totally over the other night, Will, is it? As your...friend, I hope you know you can talk to me, if you wish."

“I find you very alluring, Hannibal. You make me feel wild with need,” Will admitted, feeling his skin crawl with lust just being close to Hannibal again. “But I’ve been… burnt before. Hurt. I thought I could do it, but I’m just not sure I’m ready.”

"I hope you know I feel the same about you," Hannibal admitted back, taking everything Will said into careful consideration. "As I do not know the circumstances of this lost love, I can't be of assistance. But if nothing more, I would very much like to think we can be friends."

“Friends?” Will squeezed his hands together in his lap nervously. “We could try.”

Hannibal wanted more, of course, but Will was making it clear that he was not ready for that, so he would not force the issue--not outwardly. "Then that is all I could hope for, that we try."

It was now strange to be friends, Will knew but he found it hard to simply say no. “That's fine. Yes.”

Likewise, it would be a bit strange for Hannibal, but he would rather that, than nothing at all. “It’s settled then.”

“Yes,” Will said, and pushed the car door open. “I suppose I'll see you next week then?”

"As a friend I had thought to ask you to dinner, at my place tonight, or sometime prior to next week, but if nothing else, then yes next week it will be," Hannibal said, a bit of disappointment in his tone. Will was leaving far faster than he'd hoped.

“You made dinner already?” Will asked, curiously turning back toward Hannibal, brows furrowed.

"Beef wellington, yes," Hannibal answered, a smile forming on his lips as Will turned back. "However if you have plans..."

“I don't.” Will conceded and closed the door once more, and buckled in. “Just dinner.”

Hannibal smiled brightly at that, and hummed, starting the car and putting on his seat belt. "Agreed, just dinner. I promise to behave myself and I would like to be the one to drive you home, after, if that is alright with you, of course."

Will nodded his head, “Yes, that's fine. I won't run off this time, if that's what you're afraid of.”

“The thought had crossed my mind,” Hannibal chuckled, and backed out, heading to the edge of the parking lot where he turned to drive down the street towards his home.

“Nonetheless, I am relieved to hear it.”

Will hummed, the ride quiet otherwise. Once they were parked, Will used the steps from memory to follow Hannibal once more, into the large house. From there, he retraced the steps to the dining room.

Hannibal brought over some wine and sat it down along with two glasses. "Would you like some wine or whiskey perhaps?" he asked, the home filled with the heavenly scent of the meal he had on the warmer.

“You have wine decanted, that will be fine,” Will insisted taking a seat, his nerves on edge, still trying to wrap his mind around agreeing to this.

"As you wish," Hannibal said, and poured their wine, taking his own into his hand to sip. "You needn't be nervous, if you are. I always keep my promises, Will, and am simply delighted to have your company."

“How was your week?” Will said, moving on with a new subject, and took the wine offered to sip, the same as the other night.

“It was fine, thank you. I saw my patients and spent my spare moments procuring the items needed to learn how to sculpt,” Hannibal answered, looking at Will over his glass. He knew the conversation had been moved and he let it go. “And yours?”

“I cleaned the house. Got Abigail to help me, a lot mail piled up that I can't read,” Will explained, taking another sip. “I'd still be happy to teach you to sculpt of course.”

“It sounds as though we both had productive weeks at that,” Hannibal said, setting his wine glass down, his eyes on Will’s lips and then up to the beautiful sea-blue hues above them. “Very kind of you, Will. I did not want to ask, but I was hoping your offer still stood. Trust that I will pay you for your time.”

Will didn’t want the money, honestly, but he did need it. He might have gotten to do what he wanted for a living, but that living wasn’t one that made many ends meet. Some months were good, some weren’t. “Whatever you think the lessons are worth.”

“Agreed,” Hannibal hummed, happy Will was going to let him pay. It was only fair, especially since they had been knocked down to friends, though Hannibal was glad they had some type of relationship. He rose from his chair and smoothed out his button up. “I will bring our dinner.”

Will nodded, listening to every move Hannibal made, just a little skittish, not sure where the man may pop up. In all honesty, he knew he wasn’t giving Hannibal the benefit of the doubt. “Okay.”

With that, Hannibal left the room and after a couple of minutes, he returned. As he entered, he began announcing the dish from a ways back, so that he wouldn't catch Will off guard and set the beef Wellington down before him. Once he had, he sat down at the head of the table with his own. “Do let me know if you would like more wine, Will.”

“This should be fine,” Will said, hand searching for the fork and knife, and then picked them up. He roughly cut into the dish and took a bite, savoring it. “It’s very good.”

“Thank you,” Hannibal said, his tone conveying his smile as he took up his knife and fork, likewise cutting into the pastry, to the meat before taking a small bite. He hummed as he savored it, pleased with a creation of his own making. “It is pleasant seeing you at my table again, Will.”

“It hasn’t been that long,” Will murmured, and smiled a little as he cut another piece, and placed it inside his mouth to chew.

“No,” Hannibal agreed, taking a sip of his wine before taking another bite. Still smiling as he watched the way Will’s lips twisted and jaw shifted, he continued. “However, I wasn’t certain that I would. As such, I find myself grateful.”

“Your company when we are not trying to analyze each other is more than welcome,” Will offered, sincerely.

“There is a thin line between analysis and simply getting to know someone,” Hannibal offered back, though not unkindly, and took another bite of his food. He didn’t point out that Will had admitted to doing the very same. “Nonetheless, I will bear that in mind, Will.”

“As will I,” Will said taking another bite, only vaguely aware of his state of dress suddenly.

While Hannibal would have loved to have seen Will in some elegant attire, he was just glad he was with him; he paid no mind nor too offense and beyond that, there was likely nothing the sculptor could wear that would detract from his beauty. Moving on from the subject, as it seemed it was over, Hannibal wiped his mouth. “I assume Abigail is watching your dog while you are here?"

“Winston is at her place on campus,” Will answered, “he doesn't like being left alone.”

"I see. Very good," Hannibal said, not at all asking what he might normally, though small talk was never something he found appealing; it was fine, as long as he was with Will. "I was wondering when you would have time to start the sculpting lessons."

“Any time. I'm not as busy as you might think,” Will answered after another bite. “I haven't any projects.”

After taking another bite, Hannibal swallowed his wine and quietly cleared his throat. "After dinner then? I know you stated only dinner tonight, and if that is the case, then I am free tomorrow evening."

“Tomorrow,” Will said, wanting to be better prepared for Hannibal. “I'm pretty exhausted at the moment.”

“Certainly,” Hannibal said, a smile on his face. He wanted to comfort Will, perhaps massage his sore muscles and kiss his lips. Alas, he couldn't. “Tomorrow will be more than amenable.”

“Do you have clay or do I need to bring you some?” Will asked, taking his last bite. He knew Hannibal was looking him over with ravenous need, he could feel his eyes boring into him. As much as Will wanted to let the doctor ravage him, he knew he needed time. Hannibal had triggered something fragile inside himself he didn't want to deal with.

"I procured some but it might be a good idea for you to feel it out before you leave tonight, just briefly and ensure that it's the proper type," Hannibal suggested, only wanting to be prepared. He turned his attention from Will to the last bite of his food. Once swallowed, he wiped his mouth and took a pull from his wine.

“I’m sure it’s fine. Any type will do,” Will offered, wiping his fingers on the napkin to his left, and then sipped the wine he felt around for.

"Ah. I'm afraid I am showing my inexperience already," Hannibal chuckled, flaring his nostrils to catch Will's earthy scent. The ploy to get the sculptor to stay longer by examining the clay hadn't worked, which was disappointing.

“There is all sorts of material to use, and you’re just starting out, so there’s no need to get fancy,” Will explained, finishing the bit of wine he had, and set the glass aside, done.

"Indulgences are a thing in which I enjoy often," Hannibal reminded Will, with a chuckle, and finished his wine. "Would you care for some more, Will?"

“No thank you,” Will said, pleasantly, aware they were footing around everything here, making it difficult since they were so used to be more personal than this even after one date.

Hannibal was letting Will call the shots, so to speak, wanting him to be comfortable if nothing else. It would hopefully secure more dates in the future, be they chaste or otherwise. The Doctor licked his lips again, contemplating. "As you wish."

“It was a great dinner, but I really need to get back. Abigail will be waiting to drive me home,” Will said, hands in his lap.

"Will, I wonder..." Hannibal began, and then paused, quietly drumming his fingers on the table. "Would you let me drive you home? I have no had a proper chance to see your home. That is what friends do, is it not?"

“It's about two hours from here. I need to get Winston,” Will said, cautiously, aware that Hannibal was doing anything he could to keep the night going.

"It would not be an inconvenience but I will not make a pest of myself," the Doctor said, pinching the stem of his empty wine glass between his fingers. "I enjoyed getting to dine with you."

“It’s just late and I want to be rested for our lesson tomorrow,” Will explained, spreading his hands a little. “Nothing personal.”

"I understand, and I appreciate the reassurance, however, there is no need to explain," Hannibal said, quietly, certainly disappointed. He felt a staggering sense of rejection and

wondered what was to be done. "Tomorrow. Yes, Will, and thank you again for agreeing to do so on such short notice."

“It’s not problem,” Will reassured. “I made a promise, I intend to keep it.”

"A man of his word," Hannibal smiled, and refilled his wine one last time since he wasn't going to be driving. "I, myself, am a firm believer in such."

Will slipped his phone from his robe pocket to send for Abigail. “I don’t want to keep you from your evening. I’ll have my daughter come and get me.”

"If that is your wish, but I assure you, I have nothing planned," Hannibal said, trying once more, since Will had mentioned something regarding that. "It would be a shame to have her come all this way, and with Winston, but it is totally your decision to make."

“It’s on the way home,” Will shrugged his shoulders. “I don’t want to put you out, Doctor,” he teased a little.

"I have stated it wouldn't, but as you say," Hannibal said, a bit of a playful lilt to his tone to match the teasing when he added, "Mister Graham."

“Let me help you clean up at least,” Will said, hands on the table to push himself to standing, and then picked up his dishes.

"Thank you," Hannibal replied, and got up as well, collecting the remainder from the table. "The kitchen is ten of my steps from here, straight ahead." The doctor chuckled softly, remembering the time out in front of Will's studio. "And yes, before you inquire, I did count prior in the hopes that I would be able to convince you to join me for dinner."

Will smiled at the thoughtfulness, his heart fluttering despite himself. He walked the steps and set everything on the counter he bumped into. His hands searched for the sink and turned it on. “Thoughtful of you. Thanks.”

"You’re welcome. I do think of you, Will," Hannibal murmured, with a smile, moving the knives to the side. As his heart also fluttered, he playfully, and gently nudged the man, beginning to help with the dishes. "As friends so often do in regards to one another, do they not?"

Will knew that Hannibal would throw the ‘friend’ term in his face no matter what he did. Shaking his head once, Will got to washing the dishes and handing them to Hannibal to dry. “Yes, of course.”

Hurt, was at the very root of Hannibal's teasing, feeling as though he'd been a bit lead on and then dropped when the smallest opening had presented itself for Will to flee. Naturally, he knew the man at his side was denying himself the pleasure he truly wanted-- that they both did--but that only served to frustrate him more. The doctor took the plates one by one, drying and stacking. "I meant to mention that the sculpture has made an excellent addition to my study and has received a few compliments already. Again, your work is truly breathtaking."

“Your study here?” Will asked, tilting his head toward Hannibal curiously. “Throwing dinner parties?”

"Yes, I decided it would be best here, where I can enjoy it," Hannibal answered, and looked over at Will, a cool calmness to his words. "Yes, I do love to entertain. It was after I attended the Opera a few nights prior."

“I’m glad everyone liked it,” Will said and washed the last pan for Hannibal and handed it to him to dry. “I hope that’s clean enough.”

"They did, and worry not, I made sure to spread the word. I expect you will be seeing more collectors soon," the Doctor replied, and looked at the pan as he dried it. "It is perfect, thank you."

“Opera goers that want to have me sculpt them? I doubt that,” Will said, drying his hands as he reached toward Hannibal to take the towel from him, aware of how close they were together. “Thank you just the same.” Will hands brushed Hannibal’s, and that spark rolled through his skin and down his spine.

"You did mention you sculpted pets, perhaps there is work yet," Hannibal chuckled, and licked his lips at the touch, looking at Will's face in detail. It made him heat up, his breath almost inaudibly hitching in his throat as his pupils expanded. When he spoke, his words were a bit deeper, gravelly. "You're welcome, Will..."

Will swallowed, unable to deny their compatibility, but yet he couldn’t bring himself to do it, not yet. Will felt the leaning in and right when he was going to be weak, the doorbell rang. “That’s Abigail,” he whispered, snatching his hand back.

Hannibal narrowed his eyes in frustration but didn't make it apparent. He righted his stance, and sat the towel down, pursing his lips as he took another longing look at Will. "Ah, she does have impeccable timing," he said and then moved back out of the curly haired man's way. "May I show you out?"

“Please,” Will said, reaching for Hannibal's elbow, grasping it so he could he lead and count the steps from kitchen to door.

"It would be my pleasure," The doctor assured, relishing the renewed contact, even if it was anything but the sort of touch they had known only nights before. He carefully walked Will to the front door and stopped, his hand resting on the doorknob. "Again, I must say it has been a most enjoyable evening, Will and I will see you tomorrow, at a time of your choosing."

“I will be here at four,” Will said, touching get Hannibal's hand on the knob, unaware it had been there. He snatched his hand back, standing out of the way. “Good night, Hannibal.”

"Perfect," Hannibal said and twisted the knob, not making any reaction to the action from the skittish younger man. Before he opened the door, he added in a honeyed tone, "Goodnight, Will."

Will visibly shivered as Abigail grabbed his hand, and waved at Hannibal, and then they were gone, to her car, and out of sight.

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The next day Will arrived at Hannibal’s once more, dressed in clothes ready to get a little dirty. Abigail dropped him off and took Winston with her and said she would be back in a few hours. Will felt around for the doorbell and pressed it.

Hannibal had dinner cooking at a low temperature on the stove, New Orleans style gumbo. It wasn't a signature dish of his, but the doctor thought Will might be hungry after the lesson. Dressed in grey slacks and a red sweater with the sleeves pushed up, he walked over to the door and opened it. "Will, right on time," he smiled and stepped out of the way. "Please come in."

Will felt for the door frame and then Hannibal’s chest, with a little smile. “You’ll get the sweater messy,” he mentioned, dressed in a tank top himself with an opened plaid shirt and khaki painters pants with smudges all over them.

Smiling back, Hannibal felt himself heat up at the touch, as well as the mere sight of Will. His body was phenomenal, and his skin just begged to be touched. He didn't and instead closed the door behind him. "It is one of the least dressy items in my possession, but I can always remove it, if it would not seem inappropriate."

“I have sculpted you without your shirt before,” Will noted, waiting for Hannibal to help lead him to the room he’d set up for this. “Not as though I can see you,” he teased.

Hannibal chuckled at that, humming as he stepped closer to Will. "Very true, on both accounts," he agreed and offered his arm. "Please, take my arm if you'd like and I'll lead you to the room. It's down the hall, to the left, thirty-five steps."

Will grasped Hannibal’s bicep once more, and walked with him, counting the steps, just to be sure. “What did you want me to teach you to make today? Most start with pottery…”

Treasuring the feel of Will's hand on him, Hannibal licked his lips and slowly guided him down the hall and once they were at the door frame, angled his face towards the the sculptor's. "I think pottery sounds excellent. A vase, or pot of some sort. Something that can be of use to me later...providing I succeed."

Feeling Hannibal’s hot breath one him, Will flushed and then steadied himself once more. He let go of Hannibal’s arm and shed his plaid shirt, tying it around his waist. “You have a pottery wheel?” He started to feel around the tables in the food, familiarizing himself with everything, tools they would need and not need, and then clay itself. Perfect.

"I do," Hannibal answered, removing his soft sweater and folding it over one of the surfaces that wouldn't be in use. He looked on, curiously, as Will felt his way around, and was awestruck by the man's interdependence all over again. "It's in the center of the room, in front of the chair, to your right."

“I got it,” Will insisted, mostly trying to feel the room out, counting steps, creating space. “Sit.” He moved the chair a little for Hannibal and then started to get the wheel ready with the clay and everything else they would need. It was simple enough.

"Thank you," Hannibal said, and then sat down in the chair, watching as Will readied the wheel. "I do enjoy watching you work, Will. I only hope I do not disappoint you."

“I warn you, pottery isn’t as easy as people think,” Will replied, and got the bowl of water he’d put his hand in on accident ready. “Press on the pedal to get the wheel moving and get your hands thoroughly wet. You’ll put them over the clay in the middle and slowly press inward with your palms.”

Hannibal nodded, and scooted forward on the seat. "I will do my best," he chuckled, quietly, and gingerly pressed on the pedal. As it began to move, he wet his hands and started carefully running them where Will had said, and pressed in. It was cool, and soft, pleasing to the touch. "I can only hope I am doing this right."

“Your guess is as good as mine. We could have started with simple pliable clay and let you hand mold something,” Will mused.

"You could feel, for yourself," Hannibal suggested, continuing to pinch and mold the clay, it was taking on some sort of shape though not beautiful. "Unless that would make you uncomfortable? Either way, next time, we could try the other method if I fail at this."

“You are deliberately antagonizing me,” Will said, but wet his fingers and leaned around Hannibal with both arms to feel, gently.

"I only wish to learn," Hannibal murmured, the feel of Will behind and around him all too appealing. "Like this, Will?” he asked, and melded their fingers together slowly over the ridges of wet clay. "Do let me know if I'm doing this wrong."

“Yes,” Will whispered, scooting in to sit behind Hannibal, careful with their fingers as not to ruin the pot they were now making together. “When it gets to the height you want we have to work on rounding it out.”

Hannibal's breath caught in his throat, heart beating faster as he felt Will's whisper on his bare skin. "Alright, yes," he said huskily, and moved his hands up, bringing the sculptor's with him, deciding on a height. "It feels surprisingly decadent. I can see the appeal."

“It’s like creating life with your own two hands. I imagine it must be what God felt when he created Adam,” Will said, coy, as he was not much of a believer in God. “When it’s the right height, bring your hands inside of it, around the lip.”

"Then this experience is akin to our child, the pottery a tribute, something we could cherish more than just tonight," Hannibal flirted, enjoying the glide of their hands as he started working on the lip. It was as if Will had read his mind and he was even more enticed. "God cast out his children, banished them from the garden when they dared to seek knowledge and to try something new. Does that make him loving or afraid?"

“Both,” Will answered, his chin nearly resting against Hannibal’s shoulders, slowly letting go of his hands to let Hannibal do the rest of the work, to make it his own.

Hannibal felt a bit more confident, guided perfectly by Will's hands, though he was disappointed he'd moved them. Still, he was glad he didn't back away completely. Deft doctor's fingers continued working on sculpting the pot, proud of himself so far. "Both, yes. Even God has insecurities," he said, and kept keen eyes on his work. "I seem to be doing fair, however I've a ways to go yet."

“It won’t be perfect the first time, you might even just destroy it before you put it in a kiln,” Will suggested. “It’s good to practice.”

"Very true," Hannibal agreed as his fingers slipped. He'd made a dent at the top where he hadn't meant to and chuckled, "Ah, I spoke too soon. More practice indeed."

“You’ll get it, did you break it?” Will asked, reaching out once more to touch it, and then smashed it back down. “Start again.”

After humming his agreement, Hannibal re-wet his hands, licking his lips in concentration. "I am more than willing to keep trying, as long as I am not keeping you," he smiled, enjoying Will's body against his back as he started to remold the clay again. “How long did it take you to learn your craft?”

“Years. I start when I was a boy, something to keep me busy, off the streets, out of trouble,” Will chuckled. “I liked to prove people wrong a lot, and then a teacher got me into this instead.”

"Ah yes, I can imagine you now, long dangling curls bouncing as you sculpt your pottery," Hannibal chuckled back, and decided on a height once more as he continued being playful. "Entirely angelic, to most, in appearance if nothing more. It is perhaps, fortunate for everyone that you found your calling. Imagine the havoc you would have wreaked."

“I did, and I wanted to for a while, but my empathy made it difficult to be too… bad,” Will chuckled, wrapping one arm around Hannibal’s waist, and then reached to gently touch the wet clay, just his fingertips gliding over it.

Hannibal pressed back, just enough to show his delight at the feel of Will against him, and worked over the clay, brushing their fingers together. He licked his lips as his breath quickened slightly, a raspy laugh vibrating from his chest and throat. "Yes...I can imagine it did, Will, you felt not only your feelings but the feelings of those you disappointed."

“Often and always,” Will sighed, as their fingers slid together and his chest pressed tight to Hannibal’s back, heart hammering away faster and faster. Will was sure Hannibal could feel it.

Hannibal could feel it, the beautiful rhythm of Will's most prized muscle-- his heart-- and he knew he had to have it for himself one day. It all but sang to him as he worked on the rim of the pot again, this time doing much better. "The mirrors inside your mind can reflect the best

of yourself, not the worst of someone else," he murmured and rubbed his fingers more purposefully over the sculptor's to offer reassurance.

“Maybe,” Will said with a light chuckle, making the situation less dire than he had meant to. His hands trembled slightly and then he pulled them back, not wanting ruin Hannibal’s vase.

“If you should ever need someone to speak to, I simply want you to know that I am more than willing to listen,” the psychiatrist said, with a warm smile in his words. Hannibal continued his work his own heart knocking against his chest, through to his back, until he was done with the overall shape. “I think I've reached the smoothing part of the process.”

Will stood, carefully. “Good, it’s about making it dimensional on all sides now,” Will said, shaking his head. “I really should have started you on something easier… I got in over my head.”

Hannibal hummed his understanding and began working on doing just that as he focused on perfecting the piece. “I have never been opposed to a challenge. I find that sometimes it is best to work outside of one’s comfort zone. It provides growth and new experiences.”

Will hummed, arms folded over his chest, standing just off to the side. “Mm, That’s true. I’d never be where I am today without taking chances.”

“Precisely, and nor would I,” Hannibal agreed, pursing his lips as he finished the pot and slowed the wheel. “A good bit of food for thought in many areas, I'd wager. Regret can be a vicious beast, it gnaws at us when we least expect.”

“Your subtly needs work, Hannibal,” Will said, feeling around the room. “Did you buy an electric Kiln? If not you can let that dry and bring it by the studio tomorrow, I’ll fire it up there.”

Hannibal chuckled at that, letting the wheel come to a stop when he was sure he was satisfied. “Perhaps it does,” he said and then placed his hands into the water to rinse them. “I'm afraid I did not. The studio it is, thank you, Will.”

Will rinsed his hands, knowing full well they’d still be caked with clay either way, and then dried them on his already stained pants, that’s what they were for. “After it’s set, you a can glaze it, paint, whatever you want.”

“Perfect,” the Doctor replied and rose from his seat. He pulled a towel from one of the counter drawers and dried his hands. “I made gumbo, if you're hungry. Likewise, you are welcome to use the bathroom if you need to properly wash your hands.”

“Gumbo?” A look surprise crossed Will’s face. “Where is the bathroom? Could you lead me, please?”

"Yes, I thought you might like something from home," Hannibal offered, and then took Will's arm in his own, starting to lead Will right away. "A pleasure. It's to the right, at the end of this hall. I'm afraid I did not count the steps."

“That’s fine, I can do it,” Will said with a little smile, counting the steps to the bathroom, and then washed his hands thoroughly. He dried them. “I would love something eat, though. I haven’t eaten all day.”

Hannibal smiled at Will, and then washed his own hands once more, drying them. "Good, it should be ready. If you would like to have a seat at the table, I'll bring it right out. Wine? Whiskey or beer, Will?"

“Beer,” Will said, following Hannibal out, touching the kitchen door and then counted the steps to the dining room, expertly, and took a seat.

"I brew it myself," Hannibal shared, from the kitchen as he walked into the dining room with a beer for Will and himself. He set them down, pouring them into glasses and stole a glance at the other man as he took up his own. "I hope you like the flavors you find."

Will felt around carefully until the glass fit into his palm, and then lifted it to his lips, taking a whiff and then sipped it. He licked his lips once. “Not too hoppy. An amber ale?”

"You have an impressive pallet, yes," Hannibal smiled, placing his beer back down on the table. "One moment while I bring our supper."

The Lithuanian walked into the kitchen and scooped the gumbo into large bowls and brought them into the dining. As he set Will's down, he announced the meal and then sat down. "Gumbo Du Monde, with shrimp, sausage, and bay leaves."

Will set the glass down and leaned over the bowl, smelling the fish. “It smells wonderful.” He picked up his spoon to scoop a bit toward his mouth to blow on it. He tasted it, slowly savouring the flavor. “You’ve outdone yourself.

"I'm pleased you like it," Hannibal smiled, and took a bite for himself after blowing on it. He wanted Will to feel the comforts of home, and with him. A way to possibly remove some of the fear attached to the newness of their growing relationship. Best to nip that in the bud, so to speak, he mused. "Especially considering this was my first attempt at the dish. I hoped I could do it justice."

“It’s very to the point,” Will commented, taking up another spoonful. “Which is great, once you’re comfortable with the recipe, you’ll find your own flare.”

"I normally do," Hannibal agreed, sipping his beer before taking another bite. He hadn't missed Will's first comment either and it only proved to the doctor that he was totally perfect for him. Cunning and beautiful. "Speaking of flare and artistry. Would you prefer I pay you by lesson or once we've completed them altogether?"

“What works for you?” Will asked, “Considering I don’t know how many lessons you want.”

"Once my pot has been finished, then maybe you can assess my work and see how many are need," Hannibal offered, with a charming, almost regal laugh. "I will pay you by the lesson, then, since it is tentative."

“Alright,” Will said, and took a sip of the beer and continued to eat, like he hardly ate all. “The price is your choosing. I don’t usually do one-on-one classes.”

Hannibal took a couple more bites, considering, and washed them down with beer, wiping his mouth gingerly afterwards. "Very well. I was thinking somewhere in the ballpark of five-hundred a lesson?"

Will had just put another mouthful past his lips when Hannibal said that and had to cover his mouth not to spit it back out. He chewed and swallowed, and started to laugh. “You’re pulling my leg.”

"No, certainly not," Hannibal said, his tone serious, though not unkind. "It seems fair to me. Your time, effort, and attentions are quite valuable to me. Furthermore I feel that a man of your talents should earn no less, if not more."

“I don’t make that much for group lessons,” Will countered, shaking his head at the thought. “I can’t accept that much.”

"Be that as it may, you did say it was my decision, did you not?" Hannibal reminded, taking the last bite of his gumbo. "I will also point out that you did not allow me to pay for the beautiful sculpture that resides in my study."

“It was a gift,” Will murmured, spoon set in his now empty bowl. “I suppose I cannot stop what you deem fair.”

"And one that was and is very appreciated, treasured," Hannibal said, and leaned forward a bit as he nursed his beer. "Thank you. I will write a check before you leave today for the first lesson."

“That would be fine,” Will said, glad it wasn’t cash, then he’d have no reason but to accept it. He brought the beer once again to his lips and drank a few ravished gulps.

"Good. Would you like some more gumbo or I can send some home with you, if you and Abigail might enjoy it later," Hannibal offered, watching Will's lips as they pressed against the glass. "The flavor will not be the same but it is a lot of food for me to have to eat on my own.

“Yes, that would be nice of you,” Will said, not to be rude. “Easily reheated.” He finished the beer and licked the last bits from his lips.

"Preferably on the stove and not in a microwave," Hannibal suggested, not even owning one himself but he was glad Will accepted his offer as he could tell he wasn't eating enough. "Tell me, how will you spend your evening when you return home?"

Will hummed a response to the first bit and then shrugged his shoulders. “I usually have a glass of whiskey, shower, feed the dogs…”

"Ah, so you have more than just Winston. How many do you have?" Hannibal asked, swirling the last bit of beer in his glass as he watched the rise and fall of Will's chest.

“Seven,” Will answered with a sheepish grin. “Winston is the only certified guide dog, the others are strays I’ve picked up.”

Hannibal processed that, and then nodded, humming his acknowledgement. "They offer company humans can't, without the influx of all those pesky intrusive feelings. A family of your own and one that will never betray or leave you."

“Isn’t that what we all want?” Will asked, wishing he had at least one of his dogs now. “I love Abigail, she’s the best thing to happen to me, but she’s off to school now, so the dogs are all I have. Not that I mind.”

"Not all that you have, Will," Hannibal pointed out, though they still had only just recently met. He took the last sip of his beer and set it down, clasping his hands on the smooth mahogany surface of the table. "Yes, we all crave company, interaction, and to have it returned in spades."

“I tend to just… I don’t know,” Will sighed, hands in his lap now, reclusively. “Finding companionship is difficult, because most people want to feel sorry for me, or don’t fully understand that I’m capable of independence. I’m not disabled, I’m just without sight. That doesn’t mean I’m stupid.” Will thought back to a certain night concerning Matthew, and rubbed his hands together.

"And yet I have never acted as though you were," Hannibal said, watching as Will withdrew a bit inwardly. If only he could see inside his mind, and walk through all of the doors, memorizing each beautiful room for himself. "I have an understanding of your mind. The parts I've seen and I find them beguiling. You have a quiet power hidden that bone arena. One not spoken of outwardly, but still, it *whispers* to me."

“No, you haven’t,” Will admitted, quietly, swallowing down the tightness in his throat. “But you have this presence, something darker underneath everything that edges against me the wrong way, and it makes me weary of trusting you.”

"Who betrayed your trust before, Will?" Hannibal asked, picking up on the hints there as he observed the man’s body language. "One is not often weary if they do not have good reason to feel such. Experience is both a gift and a curse. It teaches and helps us become more but can likewise stifle that, keep us stagnant from that which we want most of all."

“A happy relationship that came to an abrupt halt,” Will said, secretively. “I never felt I could trust him, and I was right, but I did it anyway. I get that same feeling from you, Hannibal. I can’t put myself through that again.”

"It is hardly fair to make me suffer for his sins," Hannibal retorted, though still calm and collected. "I have been nothing but forthcoming, and have denied you no answers to any questions you might have. Furthermore, I've offered you keys to all of the compartments you wished to unlock, did I not?"

“I don’t want to unlock them and accidentally find the one you hide your darkness in,” Will said, wringing his hands together.

"We are all made up of dark and light, Will. We need one to appreciate the other," Hannibal pointed out, steeling his gaze on Will's hands and then back up to his beautiful yet unfocused eyes. "I wish to be *seen*, by you and no other, in the metaphorical sense, as most everyone does. As *you* do. We're different and yet very much alike."

Will's shoulders slumped as he shut down completely, his phone buzzing to let him know Abigail was there to pick him up, she wouldn't come to the door again. Will stood, a tightness in his chest. "Why couldn't we just remain friends, Hannibal? I was enjoying our moments."

Hannibal stood, when Will did and smoothed out the sweater he'd put back on earlier before placing his hands into his pockets. "We can still be friends. Do friends not engage in conversations concerning matters of the heart? Or by friends did you simply mean acquaintances that never dig deeper than the topsoil of your being?"

"You weren't speaking as friends," Will pointed out, walking past Hannibal, trying to remember the steps in his mind to get to the front door from here. He wanted to get out, go home, and decompress before he exploded. Hannibal raked over every nerve, touching every part of his being inside and out, and Will *liked* it. The darkness was alluring, but his mind told him that it wasn't plausable, he couldn't do this again and survive.

Following Will to do the door, leftovers forgotten, Hannibal gently touched his shoulder to stop him before he could leave. "Will...was it good to be with me again?" he asked, his tone deep, gravelly, as his own chest ached at the loss he would soon feel when the other man walked through that door. "To get a taste of that which you continue to deny yourself? Will it satiate you when you are home with the familiarity of your whiskey and dogs?"

Will paused, turning to Hannibal where he knew his form was, and touched his chest, sliding up his neck, pulling them closer together. "Yes and no," he whispered, near Hannibal's mouth. "I need time, not button pushing."

Hannibal felt his breath hitch, quietly, when their mouths neared and smiled, his eyes trailing up and down in anticipation. "The pressing of buttons can also be pleasurable," he whispered back, moving just a bit forward, closer. "As well as necessary. I can show you a new world, if you ask me to."

"I like my world firmly planted on the ground, in the blindness of my mind," Will said and let go, turning to unlock the door and step out, gingerly, feeling his hands there for the stairs. "You can mail the check or give it to me next time."

Smiling at Abigail, Hannibal watched Will descend the stairs. "Tomorrow at the studio, when I bring in the pottery," he called out but said nothing more. It would take time to chip away at the carefully constructed forts, but the good doctor had loads.

Chapter 4

Chapter by 11Mydesign11, AchillesLament (11Mydesign11), Destinyawakened

The next evening, Hannibal had taken the pot to Will's studio, unhappy when he found him to be absent and Abigail there in his stead. More rejection that very much stung and angered the elegant man. After exchanging pleasantries and giving her the pottery, he left and returned home to decide how to proceed.

Finally, a few days later and no word from Will, class rolled around again. This time, the Doctor was *not* alone. With him, he had a male companion, one he'd met at the Opera. A tall, dark skinned elegant man named Tobias. Mister Budge and Hannibal walked into the class together, a mixture of their unique colognes standing out as they sat to share a desk side by side. They appeared quite close, as they mused over art and music-- interests they both shared-- waiting for the lesson to begin and Will to arrive.

Alana had given Hannibal a look for bringing a guest, but said nothing. When Will arrived, she helped him to the middle, getting him into position.

"Hannibal has brought a friend," she whispered to him, having him stand with his back to the class, leaned against a prop pillar.

"Has he? Good." Will, however, felt his heart drop, and he slumped slightly, but Alana righted him.

"You haven't told him about Matthew yet have you?" she asked, curiously.

"No. I don't plan to. Maybe now that he has someone else he will leave me be."

"You don't mean that. I've never seen you happier, not even with Matthew." Alana brushed her hand over Will's shoulder.

"Don't lie."

Alana just smiled at him, and stepped away to start class.

Hannibal kept watch during the interaction, and smiled over at Tobias, resting his hand on his arm as they looked at Will to start sketching. "Isn't he the perfect specimen for sketching?" he whispered, close to the his friend's ear, so Alana could see and hopefully tell the model.

"He has a youthful yet masculine look."

"Yes, precisely."

Minutes passed, and the two stayed close, working and quietly discussing their piece.

Once class was nearing its end, Hannibal and Tobias gathered their things, and both men went up to where Alana and Will were stationed to make introductions.

"Will, Alana, I apologize for bringing a guest without notice but as he and I share a love of the arts, I could not resist the temptation. This is Tobias Budge, a very dear friend of mine whom I had the pleasure of meeting at the Opera," Hannibal said, smoothly.

"Very nice to make your acquaintances, both of you," Tobias said, in a deep and rich timber. "Mister Graham, Hannibal speaks highly of you."

"Does he?" Will asked, pulling the robe around him tightly. "I can only imagine what he has to say."

Alana cleared her throat and offered her hand to Budge. “Thank you for coming. Hopefully you'll come back next week.”

Tobias smiled, faintly, at Will, though he was aware he couldn't see it and then turned to take Alana's hand, placing a kiss on the back. "I wouldn't miss it. Hannibal insists I come with him."

"And yet you debated on it for the whole of an evening at dinner last night, Tobias," Hannibal chuckled, and offered Alana a smile. "Thank you, both, for another productive class. If you'll excuse us, we must be going."

Will kept silent, getting into his sweats once more and then into his boots with no assistance. He offered no goodbye unlike Alana, and when they were gone she gave Will a look she knew he’d never see.

“Don’t,” he said, knowingly, and sighed. “If he is going to continue to come and bring his new boyfriend, I can’t keep doing this.”

Alana touched his arm, softly, reassuringly. “Will, you denied him, you can’t expect him to not--”

“No,” Will interrupted, harshly, and then ducked his head apologetically. “He’s throwing it in my face, rather than giving me the space and time I asked for.”

“Will…” Alana sighed, taking him by both shoulders. “You’re never going to have enough time for anyone. People don’t wait around.”

“Then he doesn’t have to, but I don’t have to stand here and have him flaunt it towards me.” Will picked his phone from his pocket, and pressing the button in the middle for his ride to come. “Let me know if he stops showing up and I’ll gladly come back.”

“Will you need the money,” Alana protested.

“I’ll find another way.”

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The next evening, Hannibal and Tobias had finished attending a gallery opening. The doctor decided he needed to make one more stop before returning to his home.

He pulled up and parked in front of Will's studio and exited with Tobias, holding to door for him so they could walk inside. "Will? Are you in the back?" Hannibal called out, smiling over at Tobias flirtatiously, even if he didn't feel anything. "Tobias and I have come to collect my pot and pay you what is owed."

From the back, Will sighed inwardly. He was in the middle of a project. He wiped his hands and walked out, shirtless this time, not expecting anyone after the five o’clock hour. He was covered in clay. He wiped sweat from his brow and went to the counter where he stashed Hannibal vase, plucking it out from under, and set it on top.

“So you have,” Will said, distantly.

Hannibal stepped away from Tobias, almost without meaning to, the pull of Will too alluring. He roved his eyes shamelessly over the sculptor's body and swallowed. Needless to say, it did not set well with Mister Budge, who remained silent, glaring at them both.

Pulling his wallet from his suit coat pocket, Hannibal plucked out the check and sat it on the counter. "The...check, is next to the vase," he said, a bit breathless. "I see we are interrupting your work. My apologies for not phoning first."

“Not many people come in this time of night. I should have locked up,” Will said, reached for the check which he put into his pocket.

Hannibal nodded to Tobias, gesturing for him to wait in the car and he did, though not happily. Once he walked out with the ring of the bell, the doctor continued. "We were attending the gallery opening and I realized I had not yet paid you and needed to get my vase," he trailed off, far too focused on the man in front of him. "You look well, Will. If I may say so."

“Your opinions are your own,” Will said, scooting the vase closer to Hannibal’s voice. “So glad you’ve found someone to attend those events with you. I’m sorry to say I cannot appreciate art the way others can.”

"Sight is not needed to enjoy certain forms of art. Paintings, perhaps, but music and sculptures, as you know, are exceptions," Hannibal offered, and took the vase into his hands, stepping a bit closer. "Just as I do not need sight to appreciate your beautiful mind. I spend time with Tobias, because he does not let fear rule his desires, not because he is with sight or interested in art."

“I don’t to know the reasons you’re fucking someone else, Hannibal. Take you vase and go please, I am busy,” Will said, emotionless, steeling himself to the shaking his hands made.

"And yet you made an assumption as to why I am seeing him," Hannibal reminded, calmly, watching Will's hands. "But yes, of course, I mustn't keep Tobias waiting as we have meat marinating at home. It was good to see you, Will, truly."

“I can't tell what else you'd want in him if his eye for art is not a factor,” Will said, knowingly. “Good evening, Hannibal.”

"I mentioned to you once before, we all crave company, and to be seen," Hannibal said, stepping back towards the door, longing to take him into his arms and find true comfort there. "When your life becomes maddeningly polite or boring, as you've said, think about me, Will...Goodnight."

Will said nothing else, he walked after Hannibal and shut the door, locking it tightly. Hannibal was right, but Will would not let his instincts be overruled and himself taken advantage of.

Hannibal heard the door lock as he got into the car with Tobias, who had a dark, brooding look on his face. The doctor backed out not caring enough to try to soothe his date and headed towards his house, once again.

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Will got home with an uber this time, not sure how much more he could do the commute, with how little he was making. He got into the house and let the dogs out, setting everything down on the counter, even the check from Hannibal. He thought about having a text sent to Hannibal, apologizing, but his pride was too big for that. He wanted to pretend he never met Hannibal and then perhaps he'd leave him alone.

The sound of mud covered tennis shoes squeaking on the wood floor was heard and then a quiet, drawn out voice as a muscular man walked into Will's house and through the open door. "Still like your whiskey, I see," a man said, hand going over his mouth as he took in his lost lover for the first time in what seemed like forever. "Got another glass for an old friend?"

The man walked over to Will, and smiled. "I've come back to you, Will."

Will dropped the glass at his feet, shattering it on the ground, liquid pooling against his bare toes, having shucked off his boots at the door. “Matthew?” Will reached for a towel on the counter, stooping low to clean up the mess, but cut himself on the glass as he did.

"Who else would it be?" Matthew asked, chuckling and stooped down, still in his prison clothes. He took in a deep breath, wild blue eyes taking him in and touched Will's arm. "Let me...help you with that."

“Are you on parole?” Will asked, his voice shaking. They’d never actually settled anything. Will had turned Matthew in for what he had heard and felt done at the time, and that was that, he’d only seen him in court once. Matthew hadn’t denied killing the man he had. “No one contacted me.”

"In a way I am," Matthew answered, elusively, helping to collect the broken shards of glass on the floor. "But a hawk never remains caged for too long, not when he needs to be with his mate...and once paired, it's for life."

“It’s been years,” Will said, standing with his pieces of glass, putting them in the sink next to him, and turned the water on to clean the cut he’d gotten.

"A small amount of time, in comparison to what is in our future, Will," Matthew crooned, and stood, putting his glass in the sink as well. He took Will's hands, and caressed gently, helping him clean the wound himself. "We *belong* together. It's good to know I've been missed."

Will had missed Matthew, but not in the way he wanted him to come back ever. “What if I’ve moved on?” Will’s breath tight in his chest and coming faster, his mind reeling.

"Will, I know you," Matthew said, slowly, and quietly as he reached for a band aid from the cabinet. He gently placed it over Will's cut and guided him by his shoulders to face him. "We understand and need each other. Try as you might've, you couldn't move on from what we had."

Will shook under Matthew's hands, a terrible feeling washing over him, but he couldn't get to his phone, not now, not with Matthew this close. "Did we? I remember you believing me quite disabled with my blindness."

"I underestimated you, at first," Matthew whispered, his pitch squeaky like a pubescent teenager in love. He bracketed the man in, a muscular arm on either side as stared into Will's distant, unfocused eyes. "But I've had time to reconsider that. We can start over, Will. Dominate the sky together."

"I have a good life," Will whispered, backed into the counter, on hand bracing himself while the other pressed into Matthew's chest, feeling the rough cotton of the jumpsuit, all one piece. He hadn't been let go at all.

Matthew leaned in to nose into Will's curls, taking in his scent and then pushed himself off and away. He started to pace, slowly, and as he spoke, gestured, needlessly. "It was a bitch getting here, to you. I hope you'll consider my offer. It's a good offer, for two people as perfect together as us. Just...say the words."

"You escaped prison, Matthew. What kind of life do you think we'll have together? On the run?" Will asked, feeling he could breathe a little easier now.

"It doesn't matter *where* we are, just that we're together again," Matthew said, stepping close again but not as much as before. "I love you, Will, *forgave* you for having me arrested. We can go anywhere and you can still do your work. You can't deny that you love me too."

So someone *had* told Matthew it was him that called the police. Will sighed, shaking his head, he had nothing to offer back, no one else to claim in this case. "I'm not leaving Abigail. Or the dogs."

"Bring them with us, we'll have a family," Matthew suggested, and reached out to thumb over Will's jaw. He stepped forward again, closing the distance, ghosting his lips over the other man's. "You know what I'm noticing, is that you haven't once said you *didn't* love me..."

"You were everything to me once," Will admitted, turning his head away. "But it's been four years and I've grown without you. I like it here. This is my home. I'm not leaving."

"Then I guess I'll have to stay," Matthew decided, even if it was risky, there wasn't a life without Will. "The question now becomes, will you turn me in again or embrace our destiny. We can come back together, growing apart doesn't mean we can't become...entangled, again."

"You won't leave even if I tell you to," Will noted, and pushed Matthew's arm away to let himself by, now he really needed that drink.

"As I said, it took a lot to get to you, and I'm not going to give up right away," Matthew chuckled, hands going into his pockets. "I still remember how stubborn you can be...even when you know something or someone is right. You know this is right, so why not let yourself give in, instead of letting fear rule your desires."

Will's head whipped toward Matthew's voice at that, the same exact words tumbling from Hannibal's mouth earlier. Was he doing exactly the same thing with Hannibal as he had done with Matthew once before? "What… what did you say?"

Matthew, seeing it as a window of opportunity, walked over to Will, but kept a respectful distance for the time being. "I said you're letting fear get in the way of what you want. What you know you need. Me. Us."

Matthew's scent, even now, was familiar, bringing back the good memories of mornings runs, chasing each other around the house and making Abigail giggle in the process. Being alone was hard, and yet it was peaceful, and far less dramatic. Hannibal had Tobias, anyway. In a moment of weakness, Will leaned in, resting his head against Matthew's broad shoulder.

Matthew angled his body, and wrapped his arms around Will, holding him close and breathing him in. He closed his eyes, and rubbed his back, smiling into a nest of chocolate curls. "There, see? I told you, we are meant to be..."

It was only until Will could find someway to turn Matthew in, but until then he knew his estranged boyfriend was dangerous, and though he might never hurt Will, he might hurt others Will cared about. "Wanna drink?"

"Whiskey," Matthew grinned, and kissed the top of Will's head, letting him go. He was happy, and felt victorious for having won his boyfriend back. In his mind, they'd never broken up. All couples had trials. "You look good, Will. Been working out?"

"More work with sculptures and fixing boat motors," Will said, taking down two new glasses and felt around for the bottle on the counter, and carefully poured them two glasses.

"It's served you well," Matthew crooned and took up his glass with a toothy grin. As he took a swallow, he captured Will's free hand, and laced their fingers together to lead him to the couch. "I was faithful to you, in prison. I want you to know that."

"For four years?" Will asked, letting himself be lead, not even having yet changed out of his ratty, clay stained pants and shirt. He sat down next to Matthew as the dogs all ran in and started to sniff around his feet and wag at his familiar scent.

Matthew set his drink down on the end table and pet each dog once. "I have my imagination, just as you have yours," he explained, and wrapped his arm around Will's shoulders, fingers toying with the curl hair at the nape of his neck. "But now I have you again and I want to feel you so much."

"Let's move slow, Matt," Will said with a swallow of his drink, bare toes curled into Winston's fur as he dropped down at his feet.

"Alright," Matthew said, though disappointed. They'd been apart for four years and he wanted nothing more than to take him over to the bed. "The important thing is we're together. I can wait."

“Good,” Will said, leaning into Matthew a little more, sipping on his drink as his mind went through every possible scenario he could think of to get out of this.

Matthew turned and kissed the corner of Will's whiskey tinged mouth, and then rested their heads together as he picked his glass back up and continued to nurse it. "You never said if *you* were faithful...don’t worry, I won’t hold it against you if you weren’t."

“Just a one time thing. It didn’t work out,” Will said, honestly, swallowing another long swig of his drink, letting his hum through his veins, warming him.

"Didn't work out because of you, or him. Assuming it's a him," Matthew mused, looking at the wall across from where they sat. "I bet you let him go because of your feelings for me. His loss. My gain."

“I let him go because there was a darkness in him that reminded me of you and I didn’t want to be hurt again,” Will explained, not keeping anything from Matthew, but he knew Matthew would only find that sweet.

Matthew did find it sweet, and it made him hold Will tighter. "I'll never hurt you, Will. This other guy was just a cheap imitation. Probably a subconscious effort to have me with you. I'm here now, so you don't have to bother with anyone else."

Will said nothing to that. He finished his drink, hands his lap as he listened to the dogs and Matthew breathe. His phone rang from the counter, Alana’s ringtone he’d had her set up. “One second,” Will said, standing, walking to the counter with ease, knowing his house by heart. He reached for the sound and picked it up with a slide of his thumb print over the reader. “Hello?”

“Will, I just heard on the news that Matthew Brown escaped from prison. Now, don’t be alarmed. I’m sure they’ll find him,” Alana said, “I just wanted to warn you. You know he’ll probably try to make contact.”

“Escaped?” Will asked, trying his best to sound surprised. “I’ll… keep my door locked. Thank you for the heads up, Alana.”

“Will? Are you okay?”

“I’m great…”

“Will?”

“Night, Alana.” Will hung up, setting the phone back down, he turned back toward the living room. “You’re all over the news.”

Naturally, Matthew had been listening, waiting to see if Will would rat him out, though he didn't think he'd do it right in front of him. He stretched out with both arms over the back of

the sofa, having finished his whiskey and sat it down and chuckled. "I figured I would be, and I'm sure they'll come here, eventually," he said, canting his head to the side as he looked at his boyfriend. "I'll have to find some place to hide when they do."

“Not much around here for miles,” Will pointed out, bringing the bottle over to refill their glasses. He reached a hand out to touch Matthew before sitting down next to him.

"No, there isn't," Matthew agreed, took his newly refilled drink in hand again. "Would you consider coming to a hotel with me, just until this blows over. We'll bring the dogs or Abigail can watch them. If you want to be with me, you'll have to bend your rules a little."

“We’ll see. You could stay in Baltimore, I have a studio there now that I use,” Will explained, setting the bottle on the ground and sipped his drink once more. “In a few days, we’ll let this all blow over first.”

"Alright, baby," Matthew said, and then once Will had moved the glass from his lips, leaned over to kiss him once. He thought he at least deserved that, all things considered. "It'll be over soon and we can start our life the way we want and how we are meant to."

Will knew that would never happen, and Matthew would always be on the run and wanted, even if Will was a willing participant here. Still, he leaned in and kissed Matthew, reminiscent of times past. “Yeah.”

"Did you want to shower first, or me? We could preserve water and do it together," Matthew flirted, and licked his lips audibly, mind shifting gears quickly. "I promise I'll behave and it's not like I've never seen you before."

“It’s not like I’ve *ever* seen you,” Will said and finished another drink, a little tipsy now, but he felt he needed it to get through the coming days.

"But you've *felt* me, so a shower should be nothing," Matthew reasoned, and downed the rest of his drink. He was tipsy also, not having had any for four years. “As I said, I’ll keep my hands to myself unless you ask me…”

“Just a shower,” Will said, standing, wobbling a little as his balance was more off than usual, reaching out to stabilize himself on Matthew.

"Fair enough," Matthew said, and stood to hook his arm around Will's waist, walking with him to the bathroom as his free hand started undoing the buttons of his jumpsuit.

Once inside, he let Will go, and finished undressing, his vivid blue eyes taking in every move the curly haired man made as he started the shower water. Will removed his plaid shirt and then his tank top from underneath. He rested on hand against Matthew’s shoulder as he got out of his jeans, letting everything fall on the ground in a heap.

Matthew gasped, taking in Will's muscular body and slid his hand to his trim waist, his cock filling. "Let's...let's get inside," he murmured, and checked the temperature of the water with his free hand, leading Will into the shower once he felt it was perfect. "You make it hard for a man to keep his word. *Fuck*, Will..."

“Don’t take back your promises now,” Will whispered, reaching for the soap to lather over Matthew’s chest. He was still very much attracted to Matthew’s body by feel alone.

Matthew moaned, quietly, just at the feel of Will's hands on his bare skin, and swallowed, trying to keep control, caressing him with his eyes. He showed off a little bit, by flexing his pecs as the sculptor roved over them. "I won't...even if I want to press you against the wall and fuck you hard. Bring you to unspeakable pleasure."

Will laughed, loose lipped from the alcohol. “You have to earn that.”

"Just… tell me how, and I'll do it," Matthew said, breathy and grinning as he braced himself with a palm on the shower wall.

“I need time,” Will said, feeling like he was repeating himself over and over to everyone, and no one was listening.

"Time," Matthew said, taking in a breath to control his impulses. He wondered how much time Will needed seeing as how it had been four years already. "I'll give you time, if that’s what you need."

Matthew had scared the living shit out of Will, and then made him feel like a stupid, hopeless, dumb disabled person when he thought Will couldn’t possibly know he murdered someone right in front of him. Will had to build up his trust, but he knew he never could again with Matthew.

“Yeah, time.”

At least he got to look at Will, feel his hands, Matthew mused to himself, and licked his lips as the warm water cascaded over both of their muscular bodies. "You're worth the wait."

Will rubbed more soap into Matthew’s chest, down his hips slowly, working around to his ass, realizing just only then just how much he had been wishing this was Hannibal instead. Matthew was without the perfectly groomed chest hair that Will was fond of quickly. “Thank you.”

"You're welcome," Matthew purred, his cock hard as concrete as Will bathed and felt him up. He pressed forward, just enough to give Will more access to reach his backside, his length poking into him accidentally. "I'll wash you next, if you'll let me."

“Am I dirty?” Will asked, aware that he was probably covered in clay. He handed Matthew the soap.

Matthew bit back a sexual remark, wanting to say he used to be, and instead took the soap, staring at Will's chest. "You are, but nonetheless beautiful."

They used to get up to a lot of things, right up to the point everything fell apart. Will wasn’t unaware. But in the years that went by, he’d changed, a little at least. “Wash me.”

"Always a pleasure," Matthew hummed and started bathing Will's torso, and underarms, around to his back. He slid the soap down to his ass and quietly groaned as he thoroughly got

him clean.

Once they were clean, Will turned the water off and pulled towels from the rack, handing one to Matthew. “I’ll stay home for the next few days, get things done around the house, let them search Baltimore for you and then we can move you to Baltimore, since they’ll probably come here after.”

"Good idea," Matthew agreed and took the towel to dry off. Once he was done, he wrapped it around his hips, stretching. His heart was brimming with love and gratitude from Will's willingness to keep him out of the eye of the feds, all felt right with the world. "Do you have something I can wear?"

Will reached out and touched Matthew to size him up. “Maybe,” he said with a smile, and walked out to the dresser in the living room, where he slept now. “Might be a little tight on you.” He tossed him a shirt and boxers, some sweats.

"Thank you," Matthew crooned and pulled the shirt over his tattoo covered torso, the boxers and sweats next. The shirt was tight, but the rest fit well enough. "This works, and it smells like you, which is an added bonus."

Will smiled, dressing himself in a pair of boxers and a t-shirt, and then went to the kitchen. “I don’t have a lot to eat, lots of fish.” He needed money, idly thinking of the check on the counter. He patted around for it and thought better of it and tossed it in the trash.

“Better than what I had at the prison,” Matthew chuckled, watching Will throw the check away. “Besides, I like the fish dinners you used to make for us. Remember when we went fishing together and Abigail was running around laughing with Winston?”

Will smiled at the memory. “Yeah. I do.” Will leaned against the counter, thoughtfully. “She was cute then.”

Matthew smiled, walking over and heading for the fridge. As he passed, his fingers trailing over Will's belly. "I'd like to see her soon. She has your spirit, in some ways."

“When things settle, maybe,” Will said, his stomach quivering at the touch.

"Alright," Matthew agreed, not unaware of how many things Will was denying him, but at least he was here. He set out the leftover fish and walked over to look at the name on the check in the trash, filing that away for later. "Did you want me to heat some up for you too?"

“If you don't mind. I haven't eaten,” Will sighed, following Matthew's voice, even so much as he reached out for him, arm around his middle from behind.

"I don't mind, and you need to eat," Matthew said, and then was pleasantly surprised when Will displayed some affection. He leaned back into it, and hummed. "You feel good, Will."

Given his empathy, Will was more than able to give what he needed to, what was expected of him. He smiled a little against Matthew's shoulder. “So do you.”

Matthew held onto Will's arms and playfully lead him over to the microwave, where he started heating the fish dinners. "I've dreamed of this, with you, for years. I can't tell you how happy I am."

"Tell me about prison," Will asked, in need of idle talk, something to listen to and formulate his plan.

"Once I figured out the system, who to work over to get what I needed, it was easy," Matthew explained, enjoying the closeness. "They trusted me in there, which made escaping a breeze."

"Their mistake," Will sighed, keeping close, allowing himself the one comfort he hadn't had in a long time, one he denied himself with Hannibal.

"So it was," Matthew chuckled and popped open the microwave once it went off, removing the plates. He looked back over his shoulder at Will, and nuzzled against his face. "Smells good, I'm starved."

"Yeah, me too." Will wasn't hungry, he hardly was these days, but he had to keep up his strength, so he reached for one of the plates. "You know where the forks are."

"I do, couldn't forget a thing," Matthew smiled and then took his plate, and got forks for he and Will. He walked over to the table, and set down his food. "What did you want to drink with it?"

"Water. Too much whiskey." Will set two cups out from the cupboard to get them water and filled then from the tap. He was more than capable.

They shared a warm meal together, and then fell asleep hours later with the dogs at their feet. Will laid awake mostly, thinking.

Chapter 5

Chapter by 11Mydesign11, AchillesLament (11Mydesign11), Destinyawakened

Will didn't show up to work for three days, the studio remained closed as he tried to piece his life together and figure out how to get rid of Matthew. When the police hunt moved, he stole him out of Wolftrap and to a hotel with the last of Will's cash. He opened the studio that day but didn't show for the class, just as he told Alana he would not do.

When he didn't show at all, Alana called, but there was no answer.

“Our model has had some issues so I have to cancel class for the night, please feel free to sit and chat or draw what you'd like,” she apologized.

Hannibal, who had brought Tobias with him again, looked over at his companion and excused himself briefly. He rose from his seat and walked over to Alana, offering a polite smile. “Alana, if I may have a word,” he said, quietly, “Please forgive the intrusion, but I am concerned about Will’s lack of attendance. I wonder if you could tell me a bit more of the details as to why he is not here?”

“He said he wasn't coming back, but I didn't think he meant it,” Alana sighed. “He hasn't answered any calls either. His ex is on the loose, escaped prison a few nights ago… I’m a little worried.”

Hannibal furrowed his brow, slightly, in contemplation as he listened to Alana speak. He'd seen the news about Matthew Brown but had not correlated him to Will. “I was not aware that Mister Brown was Will’s ex-lover,” he said and took in a subtle breath of frustration. “Do you think he would be capable of doing Will harm, Alana?”

“Matthew is a very kind man with a violent streak,” Alana said, quietly, moving Hannibal away from the group. “He cared for Will quite a bit, but didn’t see him as capable of much without him. I don’t doubt he would try to get to Will.”

That explained Will’s defensiveness and why things had shifted so greatly after their first date, Hannibal mused, piecing things together and not at all happy with the image that was starting to come into focus. He nodded at Alana and gently touched her shoulder. “Will is very strong, and intelligent, I'm certain he is alright. However, if it would set your mind at ease I could pay him a visit. I...would need his home address of course.”

“Of course,” Alana said, and pulled her phone out to text it to Hannibal. “He hasn't answered there and Abigail says he's fine.”

"Thank you," Hannibal said, with a small smile of appreciation and removed his hand from her shoulder. He pulled out his phone long enough to see that he'd received the text and placed it back in his breast pocket. “Yes, and he likely is fine, but as the expression goes, it is better safe than sorry. Especially with someone like Matthew Brown running around."

Alana nodded. “Let me know if you get a hold of him.”

“I will, certainly,” the Doctor assured, and then added. “I believe my guest and I will take our leave early today from class, given the circumstances. I hope you can forgive my rudeness.”

“By all means,” Alana gestured, and made her leave to talk to others so Hannibal could go.

Hannibal walked back to the desk shared with Tobias, and began collecting their things. Tobias stood, and looked at him curiously. “Is something wrong?”

“I’ll explain in the car, but we must be leaving,” the elegant artist explained which earned him a nod from his companion. Once they had cleaned up, they headed out, and to the car.

Once they were inside, and buckled up, Hannibal turned to Tobias. “I’m afraid I will have to take you home earlier than planned. I have a few unexpected errands that needs my attention.”

“Certainly,” Tobias said, his eyes showing nothing but understanding. “Tomorrow evening, perhaps?”

“I’ll phone and let you know.”

That was all that was said as the pair headed towards Mister Budge’s home. Hannibal dropped him off and promptly took off.

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The door’s bell jingled to Will’s studio, and opened, as a man walked in.

“Mister Graham?”

Will pressed a button on his watch that said the time and he sighed. He'd forgotten to lock the door. “One second please.” Will wiped his hands, walking slowly out to the front, working on something in back. “We are closed did you need something?”; did you need something?”

"I do," the man said, walking closer to Will.

"Mister Budge,” Will said, finally recognizing his voice and scent, still mingled with Hannibal’s. “What can I do for you?”

Nothing was said, only the sound of fabric rustling, footsteps and then the feel of a thin cord going around Will's neck, which he instinctively put his fingers up and under to try and stop from choking him.

Tobias neared Will's ear as he attempted to strangle him with catgut string. "You've become a problem," he sneered.

Will thrashed, fingers getting caught up in the string, hard and cutting into his fingers. “I haven’t done anything,” Will managed to get out. He took one booted foot and stomped down on the other man’s shoe, hard.

It was enough to cause Tobias to loosen his grip, his injured foot throbbing with pain as it lifted off the ground. "You didn't have to," he all but growled, hobbling back to regroup and focus.

Will spun and elbowed Tobias in the throat, hand wrapped around the string now as he tugged it from the other man’s hands, and stumbled back against the counter. He searched frantically under it for his knife, hidden there, or his gun, which ever he could get to first. Finally his fingers wrapped around the handle of his blade, and he yanked it out from under the counter.

Tobias lunged at Will, iron fist colliding with his jaw in hopes of disarming the knife. His eyes blazed with dark rage, and yet his heart eerily calm, steady. Will toppled, but reached up and stabbed the knife into flesh, feeling the spurt of blood dribble down his fingers. He wasn't sure where he'd gotten, but the gurgling noises were enough to say he'd hit the jackpot. Will slumped against the counter, trying to hoist himself to his feet, bloody fingerprints all over the counter as he did.

The bell was heard then, as someone else walked inside just in time to see Tobias falling to the ground, blood spurting up from his carotid artery where Will had stabbed him. He'd been on his way to Will's house and turned around, thinking it would be best to check the studio first.

"Will?" an accented voice asked. The door was heard being locked and Will realized who it was that came in just after.

"Come to kill me, too?" Will asked, heftily, panting against the counter from the sure adrenaline of it all.

"No, I came to check on you," Hannibal said, looking at Tobias on the ground again and then back to Will. "I was not aware he intended to kill you, but am very happy he did not succeed. Let me look at your wounds, please."

"I'm fine," Will said, not unaware of the cuts on his fingers as they stung as he brought himself to his feet, an ache in his jaw where the other man had punched him.

"You're not entirely fine," Hannibal pointed out, and walked over right next to Will. He took his hand, and held it in his own. "Please, let me tend to this, I am a doctor. Then I will leave and never bother you again, if that is your wish."

Will looked tired, bags under his eyes, like he hadn't slept right in days. "No, I'd… rather you stayed."

"Then that is what I will do," Hannibal promised, taking in Will's appearance, assessing. It was mostly out of genuine love, as well as concern and while he displayed this in his tone and actions for Will, he had shown none over the loss of his companion. "Come, let's get you cleaned up and then I'll deal with Tobias."

"I should call the police, he attacked me," Will said, letting Hannibal lead him to the back of the studio, and then the sink.

"Should you call the police while you're likely harboring your boyfriend Matthew?" Hannibal asked, not unkindly, starting to wash Will's hands with gentle ease.

"He's *not* my boyfriend," Will whispered, swallowing down the tightness in his throat. "He should be taken back anyway."

"And he'll likely only escape again," Hannibal offered, running his hand over Will's. He used his other to carefully look at his jaw. "Nothing appears broken, but I would like to bandage your hand, have you any here? If not I'll need to go to my car."

“The cabinet above the sink here,” Will said, quietly. “He might escape again, but maybe he won’t. I can’t do much else.”

Hannibal released Will, to reach up and get the bandages. Once he had them in hand, he applied the antiseptic he'd also grabbed and started to wrap his hands. "Very true, however, I still think that involving the police will not yield the results you wish. There will always be guilt, and worry. Connections will not be broken, which will only detract from the sleep you've already apparently been lacking."

“He’s been staying at my house,” Will admitted, quietly, “I didn’t know what else to do. He put me on the spot and if I called the police, well… there’s no saying what he might have done.”

Processing everything, Hannibal hummed his understanding. "You could have called me, Will," he said, smooth and soft. "Is he there now? Or have you moved him elsewhere?"

“He’s at a hotel,” Will said, shaking his head. “I couldn’t call you, he didn’t leave me time alone to do that.”

"Which hotel?" Hannibal asked, and without thinking, brushed curl from Will's brow as the other hand looked over his jaw once more. "I have a guest room, several, if you recall, should you ever need it. You could bring the dogs."

“The Stanford Inn,” Will answered, leaning his head into Hannibal’s touch, not realizing how much he wanted it more than he had anything else.

"Thank you," Hannibal murmured, and then wrapped his arms around Will to pull him into a loving embrace. He didn't offer again for the man to come stay with him, but was just content to not be instantly rejected. "I have missed you, Will."

“I have wanted you by my side for days,” Will admitted, wrapping his arms around Hannibal’s middle, head against Hannibal’s chest, listening to his heart. “I’ve been… well, blind. And stupid.”

"And ‘I’ve been mistaken in thinking that Tobias could ever hope to hold a candle to you," Hannibal admitted back, carding through Will's curls as he breathed him in. "I would have been beside myself if he had succeeded tonight."

Will pressed his forehead against Hannibal’s neck, breathing in deep there, still trying to calm from what just happened. He’d killed man, of course he had, what other choice had there been? “Can you forgive me?”

"I forgive you, Will," Hannibal murmured, not rushing just feeling and savoring the moment. He closed his eyes and rested his chin over the younger man's head. "Though you have nothing to be sorry for in reference to Tobias. I never cared for him. We never shared a bed. My heart only beats for *you*."

“You were using him to make me jealous,” Will pointed out, knowingly.

“Yes,” Hannibal agreed, not even trying to deny it. “And for that, I apologize. I had hoped it would encourage you to push fear aside and embrace what you wanted.”

“It made me loathe you,” Will murmured, hooking his arms under Hannibal’s, grasping his shoulders.

“You wouldn't have loathed me if there was not love or feeling beneath it,” Hannibal offered, and tucked his face into Will’s neck to feel his pulse. “However, I would rather you not hate and display the alternative. I admit I am in very much in love with you, Will.”

“We hardly know each other,” Will whispered, nuzzling Hannibal back, unable not to now that they were close again. Their magnetism was unbearable.

"I knew you were the one for me, the moment I laid eyes on you," Hannibal whispered back, and placed a soft kiss on Will's neck, below his ear. "You spoke to me, to my soul and down to my very marrow, without uttering a word."

Will hummed at that answer, he’d been enthralled with Hannibal since he smelled his cologne, so unique. “Kiss me, please.”

“I thought you’d never ask,” Hannibal rasped, and wasted no time, moving back to reposition his face, angling it a tick to the side as he moved in. His hand gently cupped Will’s uninjured cheek and he pressed their lips together, softly, his tongue sweeping between the man’s lips to gain entry.

Letting out a soft sigh of approval, Will held tighter to Hannibal, grasping one hand in the back of his shirt as their lips meshed and melded together seamlessly. It was then he realized the breeze from the back door, usually locked at all times, and no bell on it to sound entrance.

Hannibal, likewise, felt the breeze and scented the dew of the night air. He pulled back enough to speak over their lips, catching his breath. "Did you leave the back door open?"

“No.” Will sighed, and turned his head to listen, but he heard nothing else. “Matthew.”

"My offer stands, should you not feel safe returning home or to the hotel," Hannibal said and moved back, growing more annoyed with this pest, Matthew, by the minute. "Either way, you are clearly capable of defending yourself. One of us, should go and secure the door, lest we be surprised again."

Will nodded, and moved away, padding across the room, to the other door. “Get the front one won't you?”

“I did so on my way in,” Hannibal explained, cleaning up the bandage wrappings as he watched Will walk away. “I thought it best given what I walked in on.”

“Oh,” Will said, locking the door securely. “Thank you, in that case.”

"You're welcome," Hannibal smiled and placed his hands in his pockets, nearing Will. "Have you made a decision on the matter of calling the police? While Tobias is not going anywhere, I do not wish for the smell to linger in your beautiful studio."

"I wouldn't know what else to do with him," Will admitted, slipping his hand into his pocket for his phone.

Hannibal placed his hand over Will's stopping him. "Please, let me tend to Tobias. No one ever need know he came here tonight," he assured, and leaned in to kiss the man's lips once. "You can trust me, Will. I'll help you, if you ask me to."

"What do you mean?" Will asked, face canted up toward Hannibal, as though he could really see him for a moment, eyes unfocused. "His blood has to be all over by now."

"Then it's a good thing you opted to forgo the carpeting," Hannibal chuckled, taking in the beauty of Will's face. "What I mean is, I will effectively dispose of his body and remove all traceable evidence that he was here tonight. If you that is your wish."

"You think the police won't go easy on me, you're worried," Will said, swallowing. "It was self defense…"

"It was yes, and I am," Hannibal said, touching Will's arm, "Mostly because once they find that you've been hiding Matthew, they may not be as quick to believe or trust that fact."

"How will they know unless you tell them?" Will asked, folding his arms over his chest. "He hasn't been at the studio until now. Besides, I can say he's been holding me hostage." Not a lie, not a truth either.

"Very well," Hannibal said, moving his hand back. Will was stubborn, that much he knew, and he also couldn't give his reasons for not wanting the police's involvement. "I do not plan on breathing a word, Will, of that you can be assured. I simply wish to prevent you the inconvenience that comes with the police, as well as the grief over Matthew. More than that, it may hinder your business here."

"It's a failing business anyway," Will sighed, rubbing a hand over his face slowly. "I'm barely staying afloat."

"You might have considered cashing the check I wrote you for the lesson," Hannibal pointed out, licking his lips. "Did you burn it or throw it away? I would be more than happy to write another."

"Threw it away," Will sighed, head ducked. "I didn't want your sympathy money."

"It was hardly sympathy when it was for a service you performed," the Doctor said, and took Will's hand. "I do not pity you, William."

"I know," Will said, shoulders slumped. "Let's… get rid of the body."

"Good," Hannibal said and then sprung into action, letting go of Will's hand. "I will pull my car around back, and open the trunk. Wrap the body in a tarp, if you have one at your disposal and we'll move him into my trunk. I think I have an idea where he can be properly disposed of."

Will moved, not as quickly as Hannibal, but around his studio, looking for the tarp, and then laid it out and rolled the body onto it, taking the knife out of Budge. He rolled the tarp and man toward the back of the studio and opened the door once more.

Hannibal had the car at the back door, trunk open and clear. He had donned some black leather gloves, and a clear plastic set of coveralls, that he kept handy in a locked box in a hidden compartment in the trunk. They walked through the doorway, crinkling sounds filling the air as he did. "Please wear these gloves and the cap for your hair," he said, handing Will the items. "Better safe than sorry, hm? Once he is in the trunk, I'll come back and clean up the studio, before we depart."

“These would have been better before I started to touch and move him,” Will said, putting on the gloves and cap, though it took him a moment to get the gloves on the right hands.

"The body will soon be dissolved, the gloves and hair covering are for the area that we will be going to itself. Your prints were already on him from the fight," Hannibal offered, though not condescendingly. Once Will was ready, Hannibal got down over the body, at the head and hoisted him half up. "If you would get his feet, please, we will move him to the trunk now."

“Hold on,” Will said, feeling out the feet and then picked them up, stumbling a little as he did. “Sorry, got it.”

Hannibal could have likely hefted Tobias out himself, but wanted to further prove he did not see Will as disabled. Once the other man was ready, he started to walk, slowly and carefully, keeping keen eyes vigilant. “No worries in the least,” he said, grunting only slightly from the dead weight. “We are nearing the door step, not much further.”

Will took the step down carefully, using the body to guide him thoroughly, keeping up with Hannibal. They got him to the trunk with ease, and hefted him inside. “Do we need anything else?”

Hannibal closed the trunk and turned to face Will, speaking at a low volume. “I have all the supplies required, all that is left to do now is clean up, and lock the studio. Then we can be on our way.”

“What of the string he tried to strangle me with?” Will wasn’t sure where it had gone in the commotion.

"I'll retrieve it. Good thinking, Will," Hannibal said, leading his beloved back inside the studio and locking the door behind them. "It was one of his catgut strings, I presume, and will dissolve with his body once he's been buried."

“Oh,” Will said, “He was a musician then?” Will assumed Budge just loved music. It made sense now why Hannibal would have picked the man. He pocketed his own knife, no one would ever find it anyway.

“Yes. He taught students and ran a shop not too far from here,” Hannibal answered and picked up the bloodied string from the floor in front of the counter. After locking the front door again, he turned back to Will. “Where do you keep your cleaning supplies?”

“Bathroom under the sink,” Will said, “Just in the back. Wait.” Will walked cautiously to the back and shuffled around a little bit, and then called out, “Okay, now you can find it.”

Hannibal raised a brow at the peculiar behavior and walked over to Will, touching his waist with his gloved hand. “And what are you not wanting me to see, Will?”

“It’s a surprise,” Will said, a sly look on his face as he ushered Hannibal toward the bathroom instead.

The doctor walked with Will and chuckled, his mind running rampant over the possibilities that the cunning sculptor could have in his bag of tricks. “I will not deny you the element of surprise then,” he said, and stooped down to begin pulling the cleaning supplies from under the sink, standing once he had them. “A mop and bucket and that should be the last items I need. The mop will be buried with the body.”

“Behind the door,” Will said, reaching out to move the door aside, reaching for the mop which should be in the bucket.

Hannibal took the mop and bucket when Will handed it to him and hummed. “Thank you.” He then walked out and back into the main room of the studio and set to cleaning. After almost an hour they had cleaned to area of all possible evidence and he then cleansed the bucket, putting it in its proper place without the mop. “All done. Shall we?”

Will nodded, having picked up the place a little as he waited, not much of a great cleaner when he couldn’t see what needed to be done. “Yes,” he said, “when we’re done, can we go get the dogs? I… don’t want Matthew to have the chance…”

“Of course,” Hannibal answered, and then lead Will out of the studio, waiting by the door so he could lock up. “You think he might harm the dogs? And I assume this means you are coming home with me, then?”

“I don’t know, he’s a little sporadic sometimes,” Will admitted, locking the door and then carefully feeling his ways down the steps with Hannibal. “Yes. It’s safer I think.”

“You, and your pack, will always be safe with me,” Hannibal replied, and opened the passenger door for Will, walking around to get in the driver’s side. He started the engine and put on his seat belt. “Has he...been forceful or aggressive with you, since escaping?”

“Not really, but I know him, if I say no or leave, he’ll just stay, insist I’m wrong, and that I don’t know any better,” Will explained, buckling into the seat.

Hannibal silently snarled at that, and started out of the parking lot, and turned onto a back road, heading down the dimly lit street. “And do you harbor any feelings for him? Something lingering beneath the surface?”

“I harbor memories that were sincere and sweet, and I miss those times, but those times aren’t present,” Will insisted. “While we shared a bed to sleep, nothing else happened. I kiss here and there, but I found myself repulsed and wishing it were you.”

“I am both relieved and delighted to hear it,” Hannibal smiled and gently squeezed Will’s thigh as the other hand held fast on the wheel. “I too found myself wishing it were you in place of Tobias. He is no longer a problem to which I must attend. Congratulations for the number you did on him.”

“That’s not something I want congratulations for,” Will murmured, “Meant to disarm him, not kill him.”

“And so you did,” Hannibal offered, his eyes shining with pride that he knew Will wouldn’t see. “If you had merely disarmed him, we might not be having this conversation now. He would not have stopped until one of you were dead. You needn’t feel remorse for defending yourself, if you do. Do you, Will?”

“I… don’t know. I’ve never taken a life before. I was… scared,” Will said, “No, not scared, but…” he couldn’t find the word.

“Did you feel powerful? In control of your life, more so than perhaps you’ve ever felt before?” Hannibal asked, his heart beating a bit faster as he listened and surmised. He turned left onto yet an even more desolate street, cracked and unattended asphalt seemingly out of place under expensive tires.

“I felt in control for the first time. Like my blindness didn’t matter. Budge thought I wouldn’t be able to defend myself, I could feel it,” Will said, head back against the rest.

Hannibal envisioned it, in his mind’s eye and wished he could have seen the whole glorious show first hand. How beautiful Will had looked, blood covering his face, when the doctor had first entered the studio. “I imagine that is one way that god feels in control. His ability to both create and end life feeds his power. Were we not created in his image? Tobias certainly underestimated you. He had a very dark side, I’m afraid. You probably saved some lives by ending his.”

“No darker than your own, Hannibal,” Will said, quietly, sighing heavily as the ease of the car’s tires over dirt soothed him, making him grow drowsy.

“Perhaps, but we all have that darkness I spoke of some time ago,” Hannibal offered, looking over at Will, the low lighting of the streetlamps just barely illuminating his stunning profile. “Sleep if you’d like, we have another half hour until we reach our destination.”

“I’m fine,” Will replied, reaching over for Hannibal’s hand, but his eyes closed. “Maybe for five minutes.”

Hannibal smiled, and laced their gloved fingers together, keeping his eyes on the road and watching out for deer. “Alright, William.”

A half hour later and they pulled up to a dense area of trees, on a narrow road. Hannibal put the car into park and killed the engine, taking off his seat belt. He looked over at Will and caressed his uninjured cheek to rouse him. “Will, we have arrived.”

Will roused slowly, and then touched Hannibal's hand once more before getting out. "Where is 'here' exactly?"

Hannibal got out and popped the trunk, walking to stand by Will's side. "On the outer edge of town, down a less traveled road. We are surrounded by trees and brush, possibly thorns and the like, so caution should be exercised."

"You'll need to guide me a little," Will said, though he was sure he'd be fine. "Feet again?"

"Yes, please," Hannibal answered, and grabbed a hold of the head and shoulders, lifting his side. "We will walk about ten feet from where we are now, and dig the hole. I'll come back for the supplies once we're situated."

Will grasped the feet, and then slowly started to walk a staggered ten feet or so, and then set the body down with Hannibal. He put his hand out for one of the shovels and then started to dig. It took them a while, but hours in, they finally finished, laid the body inside.

Once in, Hannibal covered the body, the mop and the string with lye to dissolve everything and took up the shovel again to cover it with earth. "Nearly finished, thankfully," he chuckled, taking a brief moment to catch his breath before starting again.

"I wish I was more help," Will said, panting a little, but put the shovel into the truck of the car, walking the ten paces back to do so.

"It is quite alright," Hannibal assured and threw the last shovel full of dirt and packed it down. He then walked over to Will and put it in the trunk, taking off his plastic coveralls as well and placing them inside with the supplies. Chuckling, he closed it up and wiped sweat with the back of his gloved hand. "I'm afraid I am in need of shower. Shall we?"

"When we get back to your place," Will said, with a nod, touching the car to finding his way to the car door.

"First the dogs," Hannibal said and got into the car as well, once he'd attempted to get the excess dirt from his shoes. He started the engine and put on his seat-belt, spent and thirsty. "Are they at the hotel or your home?"

"Home," Will said, sighing. "I can give you the address. It'll take a few hours."

"In the spirit of being honest, I must confess Alana gave me your address earlier, when you did not show up to class. I was on my way to your home to check on you, when I decided to come back to the studio instead," Hannibal admitted, hoping to garner some trust with the confession as he pulled out of the wooded area and onto the road again.

"I did tell her I wasn't coming back," Will sighed, not upset at all, in fact, he was pretty sure he was pleased since it sent Hannibal to him either way.

"I am certain I know the reason for your choice, but I hope you'll reconsider now," Hannibal said, removing his gloves and setting them neatly aside. He placed his hand on Will's thigh,

rubbing as he drove. “Speaking of Alana, one of us, should call her soon. She was quite worried, just as I was.”

“It’s pretty late, I can call her in the morning,” Will offered, tugging off his own gloves and wrapping them together. “I might return to class, I don’t know. If I close the studio down I won’t be in town in anyway.”

“True, it is rather late,” Hannibal agreed, stealing glances at Will as he turned off onto the longer road. He reached over to remove Will’s cap from his head. “Why would you close the studio? I thought it to be one of your passions.”

“It is, but I’m not making enough to keep me and the dogs fed, Abby in school, and the rent for the studio,” Will answered, thoughtfully. “Nude modeling only pays for some of the food I need.”

“I realize you will not allow me to help you, financially, but what about a loan?” Hannibal offered, though he wouldn’t make Will pay him back. He simply didn’t want to see his beloved lose what he was most passionate about. “Likewise, I could spread the word to some of the people I know in my social circle or we could host a dinner party to display your pieces.”

“You had a dinner party and showed them, no one came,” Will pointed out, not upset in the least, but he knew how things were. “I’ll just have to set up a studio in my garage.”

“I showcased the one piece, yes, but it was also not a large dinner party,” Hannibal offered, though he wouldn’t push it if Will didn’t want his help. “But of course, the decision is yours alone.”

“Maybe we can try it. I do have something I’m working on that can be shown soon,” Will said, secretively.

“Ah, more elusiveness,” Hannibal said, the grin on his face, clear in his tone. “Then we will do that, whenever you wish. I am eager to see what it is you are working on.”

“It’s a very personal piece,” Will said, with a smirk, reaching to put his hand over Hannibal’s.

"Then it would behoove me to cease my intrusive prodding, at least for now," Hannibal laughed, briefly, his thumb rubbing up into Will's palm as it lay atop his hand.

“It would. You’ll get to see it when everyone else does, if I do this,” Will offered, feeling at ease as he and Hannibal fell right back into the easy relationship.

“I hope you do, considering my interest and curiosity are piqued,” the Doctor said, also quite pleased with their rebonding. He’d truly been bereft without Will, despite only having known him a short while. “Are you hungry?”

“Not really,” Will said as they drove to Wolftrap, mostly worried about the safety of his dogs.

Hannibal hummed his response and then turned his hand over, still under Will's and laced their fingers together, just enjoying the quiet intimacy. Some time later and he pulled up in front of the sculptor's home, shutting off the car and undoing his seatbelt. "At last we've arrived," he said, opening his door. "I'll spread a blanket over the back seat and come help you wrangle your pack, if you'd like?"

"That would be great, thank you," Will said, tugging his key from his pocket for the door, able to hear the dogs inside scratching and begging to be let out. Will took the steps he knew well and patted down the door to unlock it. "Hey, calm down." The door swung open and the dogs piled out, sniffing and licking at Will and then Hannibal.

Taking a look inside, Hannibal thought to himself that it was a bit as he'd pictured it, save for the bed in the living room. He leaned over to pet a couple of the dogs and canted his head up towards Will. "They are happy to see you, and thankfully appear unharmed."

"That is a good," Will said, reaching for the leashes on the wall by the door where he kept them. He handed a few to Hannibal, and then they wrangled them all and got them in the car.

Hannibal got in and once buckled up, headed for his home back towards the city, thankful he'd filled his tank up earlier that morning. "They are well behaved, did you train them all yourself?"

"Yes," Will said, buckling in once more, and leaned behind him to offer each dog one treat. He'd packed a large container of food he made especially for them. "I have to so they are catered to my needs."

"Of course, yes. Understandable," Hannibal said, looking in the rear view mirror as he made a right turn towards town. "My home does not offer the space of yours but I do have a fenced in and ample backyard for them to enjoy."

"That should be fine for a few days," Will said, rubbing his hands on his thighs over his clay spotted jeans.

"For as long as you need," Hannibal added, not in any hurry for Will to leave and they hadn't even made it back yet.

"Thank you, Hannibal. I know I haven't been the kindest to you, or fair for that matter. You… aren't anything like Matthew, I was just scared…"

Hannibal took Will's hand and kissed the back of it, and then turned off onto another street, nearing their destination. "You're welcome, Will. You needn't apologize, fear affects us all in different ways. The important thing is you are here now, with me."

Will had his uncertainties of course, especially where Hannibal was concerned, like how he knew how to dispose of a body, for one thing, but it could wait. "I suppose it does."

Naturally, Hannibal didn't think they were entirely in the clear but he was choosing to bask in the radiance of the present, and see how things played out. The rest of the drive was silent, as it seemed they both had a lot on their minds and before too long he was pulling up into his

garage and parking. “Home, sweet home, as they say,” he smiled and shut off the car, opening his door once he’d removed his seatbelt.

Will unbuckled and opened the door for the dogs, grabbed the leashes the best he could with wet snouts in his face and hands. He laughed. “Okay, okay… just settle down.”

Hannibal laughed, the sound of Will’s being contagious as he pulled his keys from his pocket. “An exciting time for them, no doubt. I will set out some bowls so that you can feed them when you normally do.”

“Thank you,” Will said, all the leashes in hand now as they made their way into the house, the dogs leading Will effectively this time.

“You’re welcome,” Hannibal said, walking to the kitchen to get the bowls after locking the door. “And my offer to feed you, still stands.”

Will set down the large container of food he’d made and put it on the counter. They wouldn't’ need to be fed until morning, thankfully. He let the dogs off their leashes, and walked closer to Hannibal’s voice, hands out until he touched his chest. “I’m okay.”

“Good,” Hannibal said and placed his hands on Will’s hips, pulling him closer as the dogs sniffed out his large home. “I need a shower...you can do so first, or you can join me, if you would like. No obligations.”

“Together. I want to feel you again,” Will whispered, fingers inching up Hannibal’s chest to undo his tie and then the buttons on his shirt.

“I very much like the sound of that,” Hannibal crooned, and slid his undone shirt from his torso. He raised his hands, grabbing the hem of Will’s shirt and pulled it from his body, holding onto the clothing with one hand, while the other lead them to the bathroom. Inside, he sat down the garments, and started the water, turning back to his beloved to begin working off his pants. “Each time I see you, I am as awestruck as the first.”

“I wish I could say the same,” Will teased, letting his hands do the seeing for him as he trailed them over Hannibal’s hairy chest, and then down his slim, sculpted hips to his trousers to undo them.

“You see me with you hands and your heart,” Hannibal offered with a smile, and stepped out of his suit pants, having undone Will’s. “Which have proven to be quite accurate given the bust you made of my likeness.”

“Yes,” Will said and kicked off his boots with his pants, and then in against Hannibal, hands down his hips, feeling out every last piece of him, down his backside, over his ass as their lips ghosted together.

Hannibal closed what little gap there was, and slotted their lips together as steam begun filling the room. He let his hands explore as well, over the planes of muscle on Will’s back and guided him into the shower, under the stream. “Will…”

“I’ve missed touching you,” Will whispered, taking a breath and then kissed Hannibal again, slowly, hand coming up to cup the back of his head as his tongue explored familiar and yet oh so foreign territories.

“And I, you,” Hannibal whispered back, pressing Will against the wall gently as he rolled his hips into the other man. It was the first time they’d done this, completely nude and with no one to barge in and interrupt.

Will dropped his free hand to Hannibal’s groin, palming his thick cock with a huffed breaths against Hannibal’s mouth. “Do you know how often I thought of you?” he confessed, head lolling back against the wall.

“I wonder if it is half as often as I thought of *you*,” Hannibal groaned, and kiss walked down to Will’s neck, scraping his teeth over the carotid artery there as he pumped into the hand around his cock.

“In my mind you are there in our shared rooms,” Will whispered, gasping as his skin tingled with desire, tugging on Hannibal’s cock, as if trying to get him closer. “So close and yet so far.”

"Some of our rooms will always be the same,” Hannibal murmured, with a grunt, into Will’s neck He pressed him tighter against the wall, his hand going to wrap around the man’s cock to stroke in unison, lightly biting down into his flesh. “I am by your side and intend to stay that way, should you allow me to.”

Will groaned, breath coming heavier now as all the built up tension between them started to come to boiling, pleasurable head. “I do, I do want you. It’s all I’ve wanted for weeks.”

Hannibal moaned at that, and slipped from Will’s grasp to lick down his body, getting onto his knees as he nosed around his shaft. “Have you any notion as to how happy that makes me?” he asked, running his tongue from balls to tip, lightly. “I’ve wanted nothing more than to devour you whole.”

No sooner than he uttered the words, and Hannibal took Will’s cock all the way into his mouth, down his throat with a vibrating growl of satisfaction. He looked up to watch the reaction as his cheeks hollowed and tongue laved around his beloved’s girth.

Will’s mouth dropped open and his fingers grasped tightly into Hannibal’s shoulders, holding him just there as his hips pushed forward to get his cock in as deep as he could. “Hannibal… Oh-”

“Mm,” Hannibal sounded out, deeply from his chest and throat. He inhaled sharply, through flared nostrils as he bobbed back and forth along Will’s length, savoring his taste, and becoming totally immersed in it. The doctor slid both hands around and behind the curly haired man to grip his ass and all but choke himself on his cock.

Will’s fingers clutched tighter and then moved to Hannibal’s hair, keeping him just *there*. “That’s… that’s good, I’m-” Will had thought about this for weeks now and hadn’t touched

himself to relieve it since his date with Hannibal. Every piece of him felt on fire, like he was going to explode.

Deft Doctor's fingers rubbed circles over Will's entrance but didn't press in, to help push him the rest of the way over the edge. As he did so, Hannibal increased his momentum, his own cock leaking copiously and mixing with the warm water that pooled on the shower floor.

Will's thighs spread and the increased sensitivity rolled the pleasure right through his loins, pulsing cock gushing down Hannibal's throat as the empath groaned. His hands slackened in Hannibal's hair, breathing ragged.

Hannibal cleaned up every last drop, swallowing it down; he wanted it all for himself. Once he was certain Will had ridden out the last wave of orgasm, he stood up and licked into the smaller man's mouth, to let him taste himself. "Even more delicious than the sample I had on our first date."

"That was… nice," Will admitted, hands on Hannibal's chest, still coming down from his euphoric high. "I'll wager you thought about doing that every time you saw me in class, at the studio…"

"One doesn't need empathy to figure that out," Hannibal chuckled and nipped at Will's lips, pressing their profiles together. "And yes, I did. It was nice. I look forward to doing that again."

"Can I offer you something in return?" Will asked, feeling out Hannibal's wet form once again, never tiring of the way it felt under the slide of his fingers.

"Pleasing you, was satisfaction enough," Hannibal answered, honestly, holding Will around his waist. He leaned in and ghosted his lips next to the sculptor's and murmured, "However, should you wish to reciprocate in some form, I would not stop you."

"Let's wash up and relax, so I can," Will offered quietly, and then kissed Hannibal with his arms around his shoulders, tightly, slicked bodies together.

"An excellent idea," Hannibal agreed, and kissed Will back before beginning to bathe him. Once they were both clean, he shut off the water and handed Will a towel, taking one for himself as well. "I have a robe you can use, or pajamas, since you do not have any clean clothing at your disposal."

"I guess I did forget clothes," Will chuckled, drying his hair. "Remember the dogs…"

Hannibal laughed, and finished drying himself. He wrapped a robe around his body and pulled another one from the closet, handing it to Will. "You worry about the dogs and I'll make sure you're clothed...at least for the time being, hm?"

"Okay," Will said, slipping the robe on his shoulders. "This is much softer than the one I wear to class."

"Only the finest of fabrics should touch your exquisite skin," Hannibal purred, and leaned in to capture the ties of the robe. He kissed under Will's jaw as he secured it, letting his hands linger and then took his hand to usher him out of the bathroom. "My bedroom is upstairs, as are the guest rooms."

"Your bedroom will be fine," Will insisted, letting Hannibal lead him, not counting steps, not wanting to right now. He wanted to be wrapped around his lover once again, warm and encompassed.

Hannibal got him up the stairs, taking his time, though all he wanted was the same as Will and once they finally reached his master suited, he licked his lips and tugged the empath by the robe, to the king sized bed. "I want to have you, over and over again, Will, more than I've ever desired another."

"How would you have me, Doctor Lecter?" Will asked, pushing Hannibal down on to the bed when he felt resistance in the man where his knees gave. He crawled over Hannibal, pawing down his chest where the robe laid open.

"I believe I quite enjoy having you *this* way," Hannibal answered, his accent dripping from his lips like a jar of overturned honey. He canted his hips up, hardening cock seeking friction as large hands slid down to Will's ass where he drew the fabric of his robe up to feel skin. "For starters, at least."

"I laid awake more than one night, I admit, thinking about what it might feel like to be filled by you," Will crooned, softly, undoing Hannibal's robe as he ground his slender, toned hips into Hannibal's, the tip of his cock grazing against his balls and the cleft of his ass. Will hummed, enjoying the slow friction.

Hannibal kneaded Will's muscular ass, dark eyes burning lustfully into sea-blues as he let a low growl of pleasure slip past his shapely lips. "Did you, then?" he asked, and gently, but firmly slapped the man's left cheek, rubbing it afterwards to soothe any sting. "I imagined what you would look like as your stunning face contorted in sheer, unbridled ecstasy from the power of my ministrations."

Will gasped, his cock growing hard against Hannibal's hip as his mouth dropped open at the very thought, breath quickening his chest. Will had longed to touch the doctor again since the day he left, longed to feel his very heart beat under his palm, faster and faster… "*Please* tell me you have lubricant…"

"I do," Hannibal murmured, and tugged Will down for a heated kiss as he reached his arm over to the side to open the nightstand drawer. He pulled out a glass bottle of lubricant he had stored there and thumbed open the top. It was almost surreal, the knowledge that they were about to conjoin and become one, and the doctor felt hardly experienced emotion swell deep within his breast. Slipping fingers between them, he slicked up his cock and sat the lube aside. "Like this, or would you prefer I take control?"

Will slipped his fingers through the lube and then reached under himself to stretch and ready his entrance, having been years since he'd had anyone. "Relax, for now," Will insisted,

planting one palm against Hannibal's chest, and then took Hannibal's cock in hand, and guided it to his hole, gently and slowly bearing down.

A glorious sight, having watched Will work himself open so unashamedly, with damp curls framing his face and hanging into beautiful eyes; Hannibal had to take a breath just to steady himself. He remained still, letting the younger man go at his pace as veiny hands lightly held fast to slender hips. "William...you feel perfect, divine…"

Taking his time, Will worked his way down onto Hannibal's hard length, finally all the way in to the hilt, his head bent as his breaths became stronger, pleasure coursing through his veins. "Perfect," Will whispered, both hands on Hannibal's chest now as he worked his hips up and then down again, building a slow, steady place.

It was euphoric, the hot clutch of Will's body, the almost symphonic cadence of their breathing, and Hannibal knew that he had found his religion. Will, was his temple, that he would pray to and worship, everyday. Each downward thrust was met in time with a slow, precise one of his own and a grunt of satisfaction to accompany it. "Yes, indeed you are," he whispered back and licked into the inviting cavern of his lover's mouth once again.

Will molded into Hannibal, like two large clay statues melting in the sun, conjoining. Will let go of everything, losing himself to the very feeling of Hannibal inside him filling him, *wanting* him. His hips worked harder, crashing into each other, sweat building as their limbs and skin slid together effortlessly, not a sound in the room but he slapping of skin, and moaning of panted breaths.

Hannibal wrapped strong, corded arms around Will's slick back and began bucking in earnest, large furry balls smacking wetly as he bit on his beloved's lower lip. Heat braided down his spine and into his groin, desire burning through his veins like molten lava. He felt his muscles tighten, stutter, his release reaching the precipice as it promised to spill at any moment. "Will, *my* beautiful Will-"

Everything at once was white hot and beautiful in Will's mind's eye, all colors that were more feelings than anything else, all at once as his the coiled heat burst forward once more and coated Hannibal's belly, leaving the empath panting and writhing.

The delicious squeeze and the sight of Will coming, was more than enough to all but rip Hannibal's orgasm right from his body. He pistoned two more times and then followed suit, lips parting in a wordless cry as he spilled hot and thick inside of his lover's hole.

Will pushed back on Hannibal's cock as he came, taking in every last drop of Hannibal. "Good," he groaned, scraping his nails down Hannibal's chest as he road out the very last bit of his own orgasm.

"Very," Hannibal agreed, with another breathy groan, and ran his hands through Will's hair. He felt inspired by their love making, and by the beautiful flush of his lover's skin, the part of his lips; he would sketch him later. "A monumental way to conclude the night."

"A perfect way," Will whispered, crawling his hands back down to Hannibal's shoulders, laying over him, exhausted now as sleep evaded him the days before, it took over his mind

now.

“Yes,” Hannibal whispered back, and embraced Will, keeping him close, unwilling to ever let go. He breathed in his scent, mixed with sweat and sex and sighed contentedly as he too, felt himself beginning to succumb to the pull of sleep. “I love you, Will.”

Will ran his hand up Hannibal’s chest, arm up and over his shoulder, snuggling into him. “I love you, Hannibal.”

Hannibal smiled and kissed Will’s neck, pulling the covers partly over their damp bodies. He snuggled back and closed his eyes, content, sated and utterly enchanted with his beloved.

Chapter 6

Chapter by 11Mydesign11, AchillesLament (11Mydesign11), Destinyawakened, Identically_Different

Chapter Notes

We now have an AO3 for Steph and Tabs fics, it's Identically_different, feel free to sub there for just our fics! Likewise, follow us on tumblr!

Will woke to the dogs sniffing their toes, and only then did he realize where he was, the scent was nothing like his house-- cleaner and less rustic smelling. He slid out of bed, patting the sheets to the end searching for the door to the bathroom he knew had to be there. Finally he found it, shutting himself inside to relieve himself while the dogs jumped on the bed to cuddle with Hannibal.

Hannibal was surprised when he woke to Will licking his feet of all things, only to then realize it wasn't Will at all, but Winston. He also became aware of the other dogs curled around him. The elegant doctor yawned, and pursed his lips at the situation he found himself in, but ended up chuckling quietly and moving his feet as he sat up. Stretching, he rose to standing, and put on his robe, looking at the closed bathroom door. "Good morning, Will, I'll

go start coffee and breakfast, if you're hungry?" he called out, standing next to it and running a hand to straighten his sleep tousled hair.

"Yeah, I'll be right there, sorry. I'm getting used to your bathroom. So many fancy… things," Will said, through the door and then opened it, still completely naked.

"No need to apologize," Hannibal smiled, and leaned over to kiss Will's lips. "One moment, I'll hand you the robe." He moved back and went to retrieve the robe from last night and then strode back over to offer it up. "Once I've used the bathroom, we can head downstairs."

Hannibal moved around Will and went in to take his turn and after a couple of minutes, walked out, with clean hands, and hair brushed in place. "Shall we?"

Will was tying up the robe when Hannibal returned, petting dogs at his feet with his foot. "Yes." He reached for Hannibal's arm, willing to count his steps this time.

Hannibal lead Will out of the room and to the foot of the steps. "Okay, we've reached the steps," he warned, and then started to descend them, saying nothing further as to not mess up Will's counting. At the bottom, he guided his lover to the dining room table. "How do you take your coffee?"

"A little sugar, please," Will said, making a mental note of the all the steps and how many. He planned to be here a lot, after all.

"Of course," Hannibal hummed and went into the kitchen to start making coffee and a nice protein scramble since it looked like Will hadn't been eating properly as of late. As the sausage cooked, he added a bit of sugar to each cup and stirred them, bringing out the coffee to the dining room. "Here we are."

"Thank you," Will said, dogs under his feet, which he rubbed his feet over gently. He took the cup of coffee and sipped it with a hum "Perfect. Much better than the brand I use."

"I'm glad you like it. I grind the beans fresh," Hannibal explained, taking a drink of his and savoring the warmth as it slid down his throat. "I trust you slept well last night?"

"I did. Better than I have in a long time. It's difficult for me to sleep at the right times like people who can see do," Will explained, taking another sip with a little sigh. "Couple that with nightmares."

"I can only imagine," Hannibal said, with a nod which was mostly for himself. He took another sip of coffee and sat down the mug. "One moment." The doctor rose from his chair and went to finish breakfast and after a couple of minutes, returned with two bowls of steaming hot eggs and sausage. He sat one before Will and then himself, taking his seat again. After announcing the meal, he took his fork in hand and paused. "What do you normally dream, or is it sporadic?"

"Horrible, awful things. It's all auditory. A lot of it stems from that night Matthew killed someone in front of me," Will explained, finally opening up.

Hannibal took a bite of his breakfast mixture, and swallowed, wiping his mouth as he contemplated that; he was glad Will was finally sharing more of himself. “He foolishly assumed that because you were without sight that you would not notice?”

“Yes. I mean, he knew better, or I thought he did,” Will sighed, blowing on the hot coffee once more before another sip, and then set it down to try his food.

“Who did he kill?” Hannibal asked, taking another bite and chasing it with more coffee. He watched Will carefully, looking for any signs that he might be threatening to close off again.

“Someone that was trying to hit on me, had been for weeks,” Will said, with a sigh, and then shoved some food into his mouth, starved. “It was innocent, but Matthew has always been very… protective of what’s his.”

“Or what he perceived to be his and likely still does,” Hannibal offered, his eyes narrowed and dark at that though. He sat his fork down briefly, not rushing and clasped his hands together. “You are not a dog that needs to be collared and tamed.”

“I am aware of that, thank you,” Will replied, taking another bite with the sausage. “This is very good.”

Hannibal arched a brow at the first comment but said nothing in response to it. Instead, he hummed, and wiped his mouth, after swallowing another bite. “I’m glad, thank you. I thought we both needed a little protein to start our day.”

“We did,” Will said, and ate a bit more, slowly, then a sip of coffee. “I was growing tired of fish.”

Hannibal chuckled, and reached out to touch Will’s bicep. “Rest assured that I will offer you many new experiences, as well as broaden your palette.” He moved his hand and licked his lips, taking a bite of sausage.

“I like fish, but it's all I had in the freezer,” Will said, finishing his meal.

“As do I,” Hannibal stated, and took the last bite of his breakfast as well, drinking the rest of his coffee. “Speaking of items in your home, perhaps we should collect some of your clothing, or if you can continue to utilize some of mine.”

“It’s quite a way back,” Will said, “I can use what I wore-- oh never mind, they’re probably covered in blood.” Which brought them back to Tobias Budge. Will swallowed more coffee. “How *did* you know how to take care of a body?”

“True, and we should burn that outfit, now that you mention it,” Hannibal said, and then looked at Will as the question he had been waiting for, was finally asked. “It’s amazing what one can learn on the internet and by watching television, is it not? Beyond that, as a doctor who spent a lot of time working in the morgue during my residence, I have a vast knowledge of such things.”

Will was silent at that, trying to feel out his new boyfriend's words, and how calmly he said them, it was hard to see if he was lying, or at least not telling the whole truth. Will finished his coffee. "Okay…"

"It came in handy last night, for us both," Hannibal pointed out, collecting their empty plates. "And if you do not wish to go back to your place, then I must insist you let me take you to procure some new attire. There are not many other options, you realize, Will."

"I am aware," Will said, setting the empty mug down. "I do not want to inconvenience you."

"While I appreciate the courtesy, if it were an inconvenience, I would not have offered," Hannibal pointed out, with a smile and reached over to take Will's hand. "I only wish to make you comfortable, Will. Nothing more."

"We can go back to my place then, I have plenty of clothes I can get, and few toys for the dogs," Will said with a nod, squeezing Hannibal's hand. He let the body bit go for now.

"As you wish," Hannibal said, and let go of Will's hand so that he could take the plates into the kitchen. "You can choose something of mine, or I can for you, so you do not have wear a robe all the way to Wolftrap."

Will laughed. "Not the first time I've worn a robe out. I like to think the looks I receive are priceless, but I don't honestly know."

"Likely covetous looks, or admiration," Hannibal offered, but chuckled quietly as Will did. "Nonetheless, I would feel better if you at least borrowed a pair of pants, hm?"

"Fine," Will agreed, standing to follow the sound of Hannibal's voice, toward the kitchen with him.

"Thank you," Hannibal said, over his shoulder and began to start the water to wash the dishes. "Would you mind drying this time?" he asked, offering a dry towel to Will, knowing he would anyways but again, he wanted him to know he didn't find him incapable of anything.

"Sure," Will said, taking the towel, and then each bowl as it was handed over, cleaned, and dried, as he set them down.

Hannibal hummed his appreciation and continued cleaning until they had done them all. He turned to Will and leaned in to kiss under his jaw. "If you would like to take the dogs out, and feed them, I will go select a pair of pants for you. The backdoor is just straight ahead, through the kitchen."

"I'll do that," Will said, touching the counter until there was none left and made his way out, slowly, to the door, and slid it open. The dogs all ran to go out to do their business and Will busied himself with finding containers for their food to set out.

The doctor went upstairs, after wiping off the table, and selected a pair of soft black trousers. They were tight on Hannibal, and he'd meant to be rid of them before now but had gotten

busy. *They should do*, he thought to himself, and then brought them back downstairs. “Here you are, Will. These still may prove to be loose but they are the smallest I have. I wasn’t sure if you wished to take another shower before we depart.”

“No it’s fine, I cleaned up this morning,” Will said, unapologetically, and took the pants. He slipped them on under the robe and did them up, hanging low over his hips.

“Not a good fit but not overly loose,” Hannibal remarked, and ran his hands around Will’s hips, to his backside to give a squeeze. “I, however, did not clean up. I will go do so and then we can leave.”

“I like the smell of me on you,” Will said, coyly, running a finger up Hannibal’s chest, leaning in as if scenting him.

“I quite enjoy it myself,” Hannibal agreed, and flared his nostrils to breathe in the delightful mixture of their scents as he pulled Will even closer. “Something I wish to have more of, and often.”

“Later, you can clean up for now,” Will grinned and kissed Hannibal’s lips, touching his face, seeing him with his finger tips.

"As long as I have your permission,” Hannibal flirted, over Will’s lips as he basked in the affection, all but purring. “I’ll be back momentarily then, and you can certainly mark me with your scent again later, as you said.”

“And I will,” the empath said, letting go of Hannibal. “Hurry.”

“Good,” Hannibal chuckled and then went upstairs to get ready. Twenty minutes later and he came back down, clean shaven and smelling fresh. He was dressed in a cream colored, three piece suit, and had put on a bit of the cologne that Will liked. “All ready to go, if you are, Will.”

“Yes,” Will said, having let the dogs in and shut the house up once more. He took a long whiff of Hannibal, smiling. “I do love that one on you.”

“I aim to please,” Hannibal smiled and grabbed his keys, phone and wallet. He pecked Will’s lips once more, unable to resist and then took his hand, leading him out to the garage. “Did you call Alana?”

“I did.” Will said, following Hannibal out, squeezing his hand with a delightfully, giddy smile.

It looked positively enchanting on Will’s face, seeing him smile in such a way and Hannibal found himself also grinning in a similar manner. “I assume she was relieved,” he said, with a chuckle and locked the door behind them as he hit the button on his remote to disarm and unlock the car.

"She was,” Will said, pushing Hannibal up against the car for a long, heated kiss.

Hannibal wrapped his arms around Will's shoulders and kissed him back, plunging his tongue inside his mouth, hungrily. He did enjoy the surprise, and found himself hard all over again. "Mm, Will…"

Will hummed greedily, working his fingers into fists in Hannibal's perfect suit. "Making up for depriving us…"

"You'll hear no complaints from me," Hannibal rasped, and slid his hands down to squeeze Will's shapely ass, pulling him into his groin as he dove back in, head canted to the side to taste him properly.

Will was utterly in love, completely addicted. He kissed Hannibal harder, tongues sliding and slipping together perfectly. He moaned, running hands down Hannibal's chest to his hips.

Grunting and also totally enamored, Hannibal fed from Will's mouth, rolling his hips into his lover as lust burned and spread through his body anew. He pressed a finger to the sculptor's mouth, and traced his kiss swollen lips. "Suck, please," he requested, before he bit into his neck.

Will was ravenous, sucking Hannibal's fingers into his mouth, tasting his skin and the textured pads as he slowly wet them. A hum of pleasure left his chest as he realized Hannibal's intentions.

Hannibal's cock throbbed as he watched and felt Will suckle his fingers; it was entirely debauched and one of the most erotic things he had ever seen. After a moment longer, the doctor, with his other hand, undid the fasten of Will's borrowed trousers and removed his fingers from the warmth of his lover's mouth. He replaced them with his lips, and licked inside again as he hooked his arm around the other's waist, digits parting plush cheeks to insert into the hot velvety passage of his body. "You feel sublime, even like this, Will…"

Will melted into Hannibal, kissing the words from his mouth, spreading the his thighs the best he could like this. "Hannibal…"

Pressing in deeper, Hannibal worked him open carefully, Will having done an excellent job at wetting his fingers. He curled them, and pressed against the almond shaped pleasure nub deep inside to elicit even more dramatic a response. As he kissed back down to his lover's neck, he murmured words against his skin. "Tell me how it feels…"

"Like heaven," Will moaned, groaning heavily, panting. His head rolled to the side, eyes closed blissfully.

"Mm, yes," Hannibal growled, sharp teeth scraping over a racing pulse. He increased the rhythm of his ministrations, lust coiling like a snake ready to strike inside his belly. "Do you wish for me to *fuck* you? Here. Now. Over my car, hm?"

Will shuddered gracefully, rubbing his hands up hands up Hannibal's chest, then down his hips undoing his trousers. "Take me anyway you want," the empath said, and sunk to his knees, wrapping his mouth around Hannibal's length, suckling on the head before taking him down with a hum.

Hannibal lolled his head, large hands carding through Will's curls as he was enveloped by the succulent heat of his mouth. He spread his legs, and braced himself on the Bentley, watching his beloved work his hard, throbbing flesh. "Ah, Will-"

Will slathered his tongue all over Hannibal's cock, getting every inch of him sopping wet. After a moment more, he stood, pants around his ankles. "Now you maybe take me over your car."

"So demanding," Hannibal teased, and got behind Will. He pushed him over the hood of the car, and pressed his hard cock up the cleft of his ass. "You sound like a man who knows *precisely* what he wants..."

Properly wet, the doctor pulled back his foreskin, and pressed the head in slowly, with a deep groan as fingers dug into slim hips. Will bent and relaxed with it, taking Hannibal in slowly since he was not as wet as he'd like to be, ease him in.

"Isn't that what you wanted from me? To know precisely what I wanted?" he asked, breathlessly.

"Yes," Hannibal grunted and sheathed himself, to the hilt, as he admired the exquisite curve of Will's spine. He started to move in and out, taking ragged breaths, words punctuated. "And now I do, just as you know what it is that I want."

"Yes," Will echoed, head throw back and ass arched against Hannibal's, panting against the hood of the car, shaking with pent up tension, begging for relief.

Hannibal couldn't resist the urge to lay a firm palm down on Will's alluring backside, the sound of the swat resounding in the garage. He rubbed it, with a groan and started to pump faster, gaining momentum as angular hips swiveled to press again his beloved's sweet spot. "Utterly perfect…"

Will groaned, grounding back hard on Hannibal's cock hands pressed into the hood of the Bentley as heat braided through his spine and pooled in is loins, daring to spill. "Harder, *please*-"

With a snarl of pleasure, Hannibal began thrusting harder, just as Will requested, the sheer force of his actions causing the elegant car to rock. He dug his nails into the man's flesh and all but howled at the tight, wet squeeze. "Greedy, Will, very greedy."

"Only for you," Will managed, lifting one palm to his cock to work himself over, right over the edge, coming in his palm with a huffed breath, and then a lengthy moan.

Moaning his approval, Hannibal whipped his hips three more times and came tumbling down right behind Will. His muscles clenched and plump balls drew tight, hot ribbons of pealy come filling his lover's hole in droves. "Will-!"

"Hannibal-" Will managed, utterly spent. He stroked himself a few more times before standing straight, leaning back against the other man for support.

Hannibal wrapped an arm around Will's chest, hand grasping his jaw to tilt his head back for a passionate kiss. He drew in sharp ragged breaths, laving tongues together hungrily. Will panted against Hannibal's mouth, biting at his perfect lips, completely enthralled with his new beau.

The doctor pressed his hips against Will's ass once more, his cock softening and come beginning to leak out. He smiled over the man's kiss swollen lips and murmured. "It would appear as though we've made quite the mess, all over again."

"We're just going to my house," Will said, unable to see the mess, but feel it dripping down his tight thighs.

"True enough," Hannibal said, kissed Will once more before slowly pulling out. He tucked his cock back into his pants, and did up the fly. "Shall we then?"

"You don't mind cum all over your pants?" Will asked, aware the ones he was wearing would squish out all over once he sat down.

"I am not the one who will have to tolerate the sensation," Hannibal chuckled, hands going into his pockets. "Furthermore, they are pants I had planned on donating."

"Big of you," Will said, doing himself up in the meantime. He could find his own pants at home. He smiled and got into the car, tolerating the sensation.

While Hannibal was a man of cleanliness, there was something very animalistic and primally satisfying in the knowledge that Will would be feeling his reminder on the long drive to Wolftrap. He got into the car, buckled up, and started the engine. "I must say, if the other surprise you have planned, is anything like the one you just shared, I will be quite overjoyed."

"What surprise is it I just shared?" Will asked, coyly, turning his head toward Hannibal, floppy curls falling into his eyes.

Hannibal looked over, momentarily awestruck and licked his lips as he squeezed Will's hand before backing out of the garage. "Your predisposition to spontaneous sexual encounters. Not something I had expected but was quite pleased to learn."

"Ah," Will said with a smile, letting go of Hannibal's hand he reached for his thigh. "I'm full of surprises, you'll find."

"And I look forward to discovering each and every one," the Doctor crooned, pulling out onto the main road, turning left to head towards Will's house.

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They arrived a bit later, and Will got out once more, taking the steps he knew well enough to the front door to unlock, only to find the door was ajar. He pushed it open, immediately running into something and tripping over it, falling to his knees. He landed in his palms with a thud. He patted around, only to find everything seemed to be out of place.

"Will," Hannibal called out, walking over quickly to offer his hand to help his beau up. He looked beyond the door and saw the disarray, anger twisting inside his gut at the very appalling revelation. "*Matthew* appears to have left his mark."

“How bad is it?” Will asked, taking Hannibal’s hand to get to his feet once more. Matthew had seen what Will did not want him to see, but it was unfortunate the man had found out the way he had.

"He seems to have been looking for something, as well as destroying your things out of spite," Hannibal said, stepping more inside, and assessing the damage. "Broke a few of your fishing items, knocked over things. Nothing that cannot be repaired or replaced, however. It looks like the work of an insolent, brooding toddler."

“About right,” Will sighed, “I’ll have to change the locks I guess, but he won’t come back here.” Will held fast to Hannibal’s arms, trying not to trip over anything else.

"Yes, a good idea. Also fortunate that we retrieved the dogs," Hannibal agreed, musing as he guided Will through the house, carefully. "What makes you certain he will not come back?"

“I’m not technically here,” Will said, “Can you help me find my clothes and pack them? I’m not sure they aren’t all over the house now.”

"Yes, he did scatter them about, and likely took an item or two, I would wager," Hannibal said, infuriated inwardly. He lead Will over to the opened dresser, and began to pull out the clothing that hadn't been strung about. "Of course I'll help."

“Thanks,” Will said, going through boxers and undershirts, and then felt his way to the closet, finding what he could of those clothes, too.

Hannibal spotted a duffle bag and pulled it from the area it had been slung, opening it up for the clothing Will selected. As he walked over, he stepped on a squeaky dog toy and chuckled. “Shall we bring this as well?”

“That’s Buster’s favorite, so you might want to,” Will said with a grin, over his shoulder, toward Hannibal’s voice. He set the things down over the sofa for now.

“We would not want Buster to be without his most prized possession, now would we?” Hannibal grinned back, and gathered the clothing Will set on the sofa, placing them neatly into the duffle bag. “Perhaps another bag for the dog toys. I’ll look around and see what I can find, unless you have a preference?”

“There should be a suitcase under the bed,” Will replied, not minding at all that Hannibal was looking around, after all Will had nothing to hide.

“Thank you,” Hannibal said, and then leaned down to grab the suitcase from under the bed. He pulled it out and placed it on top, opening it up. He assumed Will wouldn’t mind, since he’d asked him to help but more than that, he loved the opportunity to get a look at how his beloved’s day to day went. “I presume each member of your pack has their own personal favorite toy?”

“They are usually in a basket by the fireplace, not sure if they still are?” Will said, slowly making his way to the kitchen to bag up any leftover ingredients for the dogs’ food.

“Ah, yes, here they are,” Hannibal called out, eyeing them with amusement. He added them to the suitcase. “I have to ask, Will. I notice your bed is here, in lieu of the bedroom. Is it more for convenience or something more?”

“You try being blind when you have an intruder,” Will said, snarkily, and set out the food stuff on the counter and then looked for a bag.

“And yet you handled Tobias quite well,” Hannibal pointed out, paying Will a compliment, even if it hadn’t occurred at his home. He walked over to his lover and leaned against the counter. “Do you need me to gather up anything further?”

“I know where everything is in my studio, as I do my home,” Will explained. “But being by the front door usually fends people off.

“As it should,” Hannibal agreed, and placed his hands into his pockets until Will was finished or let him know if he needed any more help. “It seems very peaceful here. I can see you curled up by the fire, surrounded by dogs with a whiskey in your hand as the cool breeze blows in. Soothing, I’d imagine.”

“Sometimes. I mostly fix boat motors by fireside,” Will said with a smile, and moved slowly over, careful not to trip over anything else, and set the bag down near Hannibal’s voice. He quickly took a pair of jeans out and changed.

“Planning a boat trip or more for a hobby to still your active mind?” Hannibal asked, and went to grab the duffel bag, as well as the suitcase he’d packed, setting them next to the one Will had placed on the floor. He took his boyfriend’s hand and gently pulled him near.

“Little of both. I know I can’t really sail alone, so it’s a fruitless labor,” Will chuckled, arm going around Hannibal’s shoulders. He rested his face against his neck, enjoying their closeness.

“We could sail together sometime, if you’d like,” Hannibal offered, with a smile in his tone as he nuzzled Will back. He turned his head a fraction to gently kiss the other man’s skin, all but purring at the striking intimacy.

“You’d want to?” Will asked, curious more than anything if Hannibal meant it. “It’s not for everyone.” Though Matthew had said years ago he would take Will, but then things fell apart.

“I enjoy trying new things, seeing new places,” Hannibal answered, honestly. Sailing was one thing, fishing was another. “Mostly, I wish to experience the things you love and explore the world together.”

“What can I experience with you, in return?” Will asked, holding Hannibal close like this, he didn’t want to move.

“Anything you wish,” Hannibal said and then teased by adding, “the opera, the symphony…” He nipped at Will’s lips, the hint of a chuckle on his lips, likewise unwilling to let go.

“I love the symphony,” Will said, tucking his head under Hannibal’s chin. “It’s beautiful.”

“Another pleasant surprise,” Hannibal murmured, and ran his hands down Will’s back, letting them rest above his ass. “Then we should start there. Next week, if you’d like?”

“It’d be my pleasure to escort you,” Will teased, and finally let go to squat down and get the bags near his feet. “When did you want to do that… dinner party?”

“Why thank you,” Hannibal chuckled again and then took one of the bags as well. “I was thinking that after the symphony might be an excellent and convenient time. I will let them know in advance, naturally, and it will likewise give you time to select the pieces you wish to have on display. Do you find the idea agreeable?”

“Yes,” Will said, “I should have my new piece done by then.” He shuffled around a few things, and out the door, carefully.

Hannibal had kept an eye to make sure Will wasn’t going to fall, as they’d walked out and once they were he retrieved his car keys. “Perfect,” he began, and popped the trunk, heading to the back of the Bentley. “My curiosity is beyond piqued.”

Will locked up his house first, and then followed Hannibal and the sound of his shoes crunching over asphalt. “I am sure you’ll enjoy it. It’s quite personal, to me.”

"Then I’m certain I will,” Hannibal agreed, arching a brow as he mused over the possibilities. He started loading the bags into the trunk, with Will’s help and closed it. “Was there anywhere else you needed to go, before returning to my home?”

“I don’t think so.” Will got in. “You have more than enough food at your home, I don’t think I need groceries.”

“No, not in the least. I have plenty,” Hannibal smiled, and then got in as well, starting the car and backing out of the driveway to head back home.

“I brought stuff for my dogs, to make their food, hope that’s okay. I don’t like giving them kibble and canned food,” Will explained. “It’s not the best. I like knowing what’s going into their food.”

“As you should. I know I personally am very particular about what I put into my body,” Hannibal said, driving down the road. “You should also remember to take care of yourself. However, when you’re at my home, you can rest assured that you will always have something nutritious to eat.”

“I tend to care for the dogs or Abigail more,” Will admitted ad they drove back into Baltimore, resting his head back against the seat, feeling the smooth coast of the luxury car. “I get into my work and I forget.”

“While it’s important to care for our loved ones, I strongly urge you to do so for yourself. Be that as it may, as I’ve said, I’ll gladly serve as reminder in that regard,” Hannibal offered, reaching out to rub Will’s thigh.

“I’ve lived this long with help but I’ll keep it in mind,” Will said, taking Hannibal’s need to care in stride, instead of being snarky or rude about it, as he usually might to someone else.

“Please do,” Hannibal replied, not having offered the help because Will was without sight, but only because his beau clearly didn’t take care of himself in certain aspects that had nothing to do with that. Still, he decided to change the subject, not wanting to seem as though he was pitying him. “I can only assume that Matthew saw us together in your studio last night and that is why he reacted in such a way.”

“It is. I’m sure of it. I mentioned you in passing, but that was it,” Will sighed, rubbing his palms over his thighs. “I should check on Abigail too. They were close once.”

Hannibal wondered what Will had said exactly, but didn’t ask, instead focusing on Abigail. He didn’t know her other than the interactions they’d had at the studio, but as she was important to Will, she was important to him, through proxy and out of interest. “Yes, agreed. You should call her as soon as possible, or we could go to her dorm, if you’d like?”

“I’ll call, she might be out,” Will said, and pulled his phone from his pocket, and hit the thumb print activator on it, and then spoke into the phone. “Abigail.” The phone started to ring. Just as the thought, she didn’t answer. “Abby, it’s Dad. Just checking in on you, please call when you get this.” He hung up.

“Is it usual for her to be out, this time of day?” Hannibal asked, his mind running through scenarios of where she might be or if Matthew had found her. He simply could not wait to get his hands on Matthew. The doctor turned right, onto the next street, eyes narrowed in contemplation.

“She’s in class right now, so it’s usual,” Will explained, frowning. “If she doesn’t call back in an hour I’ll worry.”

“Then time will tell,” Hannibal remarked, wondering if she would call or if they would be taking a trip to her campus later. He took Will’s hand and rubbed his thumb over his knuckles, soothingly. “Try not to worry just yet, hm? As you said, we have an hour if nothing else.”

“I hope she's okay. She can take care of herself,” Will offered as he tried to convince himself Matthew wouldn't go after her.

“I do not know much about her, but if she takes after you, even in the smallest measure, I’m sure she will be able to hold her own,” Hannibal assured, looking over at Will at a red light.

“If I taught her anything it was to be resilient. She'll be fine, but Matthew can be charming and they were close once.” The worry now ebbed into Will like a dagger, crushed between his ribs and twisting slowly.

“We can still head to the campus,” Hannibal reminded, sensing Will’s worry. It rolled off of him in thick waves and he wanted to let his beau know he was willing to handle the problem. “Or we can wait. Whatever you decide, Mylimasis.”

“Maybe we should stop by, just to see,” Will said, hands squeezed in his lap. He knew she was fine, Matthew cared about her, he wouldn’t try hurt her. Would he?

“Then we shall,” Hannibal nodded, and once the light was green, he turned left, to head towards the freeway. He rubbed Will’s back with his free hand, lightly toying with the hairs on the nap of his neck, affectionately. “I did not mean to provoke worry, Will, but as she is your family, I also want to see that she is safe. That you both are, and that includes your pack.”

“Matthew can be dangerous, so it's smart to be careful,” Will said, licking his lips, then bit them, worried.

“It is indeed,” Hannibal said, quietly, his eyes darkening at the thought. “However, I am not without my ways. I can handle him, if need be.”

“Could you now?” Will asked, slipping a hand over his Hannibal's thigh, a little too high up, but he couldn't tell.

“I could,” Hannibal smiled, placing his hand over Will’s briefly, rubbing there. He made another turn, onto the freeway, staying in the right lane. “Perhaps you are not the only one with surprises, hm?”

“So I should not have worried about what might have happened if Tobias had come for you?” Will asked, teasingly, rubbing his thumb over Hannibal’s thigh.

“No, but I appreciate the concern all the same,” Hannibal crooned, licking his lips as the Bentley rolled down the road. It started to rain, sky darkening as water pelted the glass in a soothing rhythm.

“Is it raining?” Will asked, rolling down his window to stick his hand out, to feel it, a smile spreading across his lips.

“Yes,” Hannibal smiled, though he could see Will had his answer. He adored seeing his beau smile like that. There was practically nothing more beautiful. “Fond of the rain?”

“I don’t mind it,” Will said, loving the feel of it, since he could not see it. “Everything about it is peaceful.”

“It is,” Hannibal agreed, with a quiet hum. “The fragrance often takes me back to my childhood, in Lithuania. Before I lost my parents.”

“Reminds me of New Orleans, rains a lot there in the summer, it’s really nice,” Will replied with a smile.

“Another place that we should visit,” Hannibal offered, and exited the freeway to head towards the campus. “If you’d like?”

“Maybe when this whole thing clears up and I can get myself into better standing with my bank account,” Will replied, bringing his hand back in, window rolled up once more.

“Or you could allow me to pay for the holiday,” Hannibal said, looking over at Will. “As you said, when everything has been taken care of concerning Matthew.”

“One step at a time,” Will offered, easily, rubbing his hand over Hannibal’s thigh. “I know you have the money, but that doesn’t mean I need you to pay for everything.”

“Quite right, however you have yet to allow me the courtesy of paying for anything, Will,” Hannibal pointed out, but kindly, and took Will’s hand into his own. He turned on his blinker, at another light, waiting to bear right and near the campus.“But yes, one step at a time indeed.”

“You can pay for one thing,” Will decided, squeezing Hannibal hand. “Pick wisely.”

Hannibal chuckled, thumbing over Will’s hand and started heading down the road when the light turned green. “I will have to contemplate that, although I already have a few ideas.”

“You could just say you’ll pay for the bust,” Will chuckled, with a bigger smile. “Nothing to think about.”

“Ah, but that was a gift, and I would not wish to take away from the gesture,” Hannibal grinned, looking at Will as he got into the right lane. “I could take you to Paris, or Italy and we could explore the art there. The old sculptures would no doubt enchant you.”

“If they let me touch them, or it’s a waste of time,” Will pointed out, glad Hannibal finally accepted his gift as it was.

“True enough,” Hannibal agreed, but wouldn’t force Will to go if he didn’t want to. “I will look into it, and keep pondering over the idea, then.”

Will knew it was difficult for most to understand his blindness, the things he could enjoy or couldn’t. He tried to enjoy everything, but things that could only be seen were nothing to him, not even when read about or described. “Alright.”

“If nothing else we can go to New Orleans and you could show me where you became a man,” Hannibal offered, not upset or offended in the least and as a doctor understood at least better than most the trails that would come with blindness. He pulled into the campus parking lot at last, and parked. “We have arrived at last.”

"She’s in lot B,” Will said, letting the topic go for now.

Hannibal wasn’t sure what had caused the mood shift, but assumed it was likely borne from the worry Will felt for his daughter. He released Will’s hand and turned off the engine. He hummed his understand and then undid his seat belt, getting out of the car and walking over to wait for his beau.

Will got out, not used to the campus, since he hardly visited unless Abigail asked him to. He took Hannibal’s hand. “I’m not sure which way that is.” He could figure it out, of course, if

he wanted.

“Nor am I,” Hannibal chuckled, softly, and started to lead them towards the campus courtyard. “I assume there will be a map in the courtyard. We’ll check there first.”

“Yes. I’d usually have Abigail with me, but she hasn’t answered,” Will sighed, walking in the light rain together.

“We’re nearly there,” Hannibal assured, feeling the tension radiating off of his beloved. He only hoped that Abigail was alright. He read the large map, and the doctor squeezed Will’s hand. “It’s just across the yard and to the left. Not far.”

"Thank you,” Will said as they walked, and soon they were in the dorms area. They entered one hall and a woman asked them to sign in. Will felt around for a pen touched the pad of paper, and the woman gently guided him to the spot. He signed them in and they were told where Abigail’s room was located.

Hannibal walked with Will to Abigail’s room, stopping at the door to let his beloved be the one to knock. Still, he listened, trying to hear if there were any telling noises of struggle. “Nothing looks amiss, at least not from out here,” he whispered.

“She might be in class, or at lunch…” Will reasoned, and knocked on the door, waiting. After a moment, the door opened and wind chaffed brunette opened the door and smiled when she saw Will.

“Dad? Oh, god, did you call?” She pulled her phone from her pocket, seeing the missed call. “It was on silent. God, I am so sorry…”

“It’s okay, we were… in the neighborhood, and with Matthew on the loose, Hannibal and I thought it best to check on you,” Will answered.

“Hannibal, huh?” Abigail said, and opened the door into the tidy dorm room for them to enter. She offered her hand to Hannibal. “Nice to meetcha.”

Hannibal took her hand, once inside, and shook gently. “Nice to formally make your acquaintance, Abigail. I know we have not had the chance to speak more than the couple of brief interactions in your father’s studio.” He smiled, and let go, taking a look around at how neat and kempt everything was. Impressive.

“Dad’s talked a lot about you,” she said and shut the door behind them. She touched Will’s shoulder and hugged him. “Matthew hasn’t been around, haven’t even heard from him, I promise.”

“That’s good,” Will said, sighing. “He ransacked the house.”

“Really?”

“Yeah,” Will nodded, taking a deep breath, calm now that he knew Abigail was fine.

Observing the interaction, Hannibal smiled and then looked at Abigail. “Your father is staying with me for a few days, with the dogs. Just to be safe,” he said, wanting to reassure her. “He’s spoken of you as well...all good things, of course.”

Abigail smiled, her blue eyes twinkling a little and nudged her father, clear that their relationship was far more than just a father daughter one, but that of good friends who had grown together.

“I’m glad someone’s been watching after him. He’s very stubborn,” Abigail warned.

“Ah, yes. I’ve been getting to know Will’s stubborn nature,” Hannibal chuckled and cast a playful side eye to his beau. “He’s very capable of handling himself, and has made sure I know that.”

“He is. He taught me everything I know in taking care of myself,” she said and leaned over to kiss Will’s cheek and smiled at Hannibal. “So this your boyfriend, dad?”

"Uh, well… yes,” Will said, bashfully.

Hannibal looked at Will, admiring the way he responded so shyly and then glanced over to Abigail. “Providing I have your consent, naturally,” he said, charmingly as he canted his head curiously to the brunette.

“As long as Dad is happy, I’m happy. I haven’t seen him this happy since…” Abigail shrugged, knowingly.

“Matthew,” Will continued on. “Since Matthew. It’s fine. I’m not against talking about it now.” Not since Hannibal knew now anyway.

“Oh yeah? Since when?”

“Since now.”

Hannibal hummed his appreciation at Abigail, and then placed his hands into his pockets, pursing his lips in thought. “Yes, and on that note, you are more than welcome to come stay at my home as well, Abigail, if you wish and want to. Just until everything with Matthew has been attended to. I have several guest rooms.”

“I might, finals are over, and my roommate is a bore,” Abigail said with a laugh, delighted to see her father with an older boyfriend.

“You let us know, you know where Hannibal lives,” Will noted, and reached for Hannibal’s hand. “We won’t keep you right now though.”

“Yeah, I got one more final today and then maybe I’ll come crash your private party,” she teased.

“Please do, it would be of no inconvenience,” Hannibal assured, with another smile and friendly wink. He gently squeezed Will’s hand, and started heading to the door. “We will let you tend to your studies, again, it was a pleasure, Abigail.”

“Call please if anything happens,” Will sighed, and let Abigail hug him one more time, and then followed Hannibal out once more. Once they were alone again and heading to Hannibal car, Will squeezed his hand. “She was fine, I should have known.”

“It cost us nothing to be sure of that,” Hannibal offered, and laced their fingers together. “She is quite the impressive young woman. I can see you two are very close.”

“I’m all she had for a long time,” Will said as they signed out once more, and then back to Hannibal’s car. “She’s very independent, but helps me a lot if I need it. Well, when I say I need it.”

“Which I would wager is not often,” Hannibal mused, looking over at Will as they walked, the rain having stopped for now. “In days such as these it is crucial a young woman, or anyone for that matter, to not entirely depend on another. Still, there is likewise, nothing wrong in accepting help when one needs it.”

“I prefer a partnership, if available,” Will countered, letting Hannibal lead him with all the trust in the world as they walked slowly to the car.

“That is precisely what I am offering,” Hannibal explained, not harshly but more to confirm. When they reached the car, he disarmed it, and decided against opening Will’s door.

“What does that mean to you?” Will asked, letting go of Hannibal’s hand, patting down the car to find the handle which he used to open the door, albeit not without a few fingerprints on the glass.

“That we are both of equal standing, not dependent on the other but we will help one another when and if it should be necessary,” Hannibal explained, looking at the smudges on the window when he and Will were both in the car. He didn’t mind, and would clean it later. “And you?”

“The same. I wanted to be sure we were on the same page. That we understand each other as we grow together and learn about one another,” Will said, buckling his seatbelt after a few goes at trying to get it in.

Hannibal buckled up and started the car, backing out. “We are and we do,” he said, pulling out into the main road. “I want you to believe in the best of me, just as I, believe in the best of you.”

“You have many compartments left for me to find the key and open,” Will offered, knowingly. “You’ve uncovered my biggest already.”

“Ask me anything you wish,” Hannibal offered, as he had once before, thinking it might go better this time since he detected the whisper of epiphany in Will’s tone. “I’ll answer yes or no.”

“Have you ever killed anyone?” Will asked, bluntly.

“Yes,” Hannibal answered, though given he was once a surgeon, that could be looked at clinically. Though he was sure that Will knew better, given he’d asked the question to begin with.

Will knew, of course. “How?”

Not a yes or no question, but Hannibal decided that didn’t matter. He was also aware that what he was about to say would Will he had killed more than one person. It would be interesting to see how his beloved reacted, but he was hopeful it would be received well. “Numerous ways. With my hands, a scalpel. The possibilities are endless.”

“Intimately,” Will said, his blinded gaze straight ahead as his expression was more emotionless than usually, clearly working all the factors into place.

“Yes,” Hannibal agreed, turning onto the freeway again. He looked over at Will, trying to read his face and then touched his leg. “I would never hurt you, Will. I trust you know that.”

“I know,” Will said, his face placated for the most part. He’d known Hannibal was dark like Matthew from the start, it’s what drew his attraction, after all.

“Good, and now you have opened my biggest, most well concealed compartment,” Hannibal said, keeping his eyes on the road, save for the occasional glance at Will. “How does it make you feel?”

“I’m not sure. How should it make me feel, Doctor?” Will asked, curiously what Hannibal assumed of him.

“Given that we have both taken a life, I would assume that you felt the same rush of power that I do. That *God* does,” Hannibal began, moving into the left lane to pass a car, and then back in the right. “However, what I wonder the most is if you feel remorse, given that it was, as a rule, in self defense.”

“No remorse,” Will whispered. “Perhaps a longing for something better, but he attacked me, what was I to do?”

“You did as you should have, what your very nature encouraged you to do,” Hannibal offered, rubbing Will’s thigh. “Having no remorse is the mark of a true killer.”

“What does that make me then? Or you, for that matter?” Will asked, breath even as they drove.

“It needn’t make you anything, it simply is,” Hannibal answered, calmly. “The important question is what will you do with information? Will you accept and fuel your radiance, or deny yourself?”

“Have I denied myself since last night?” Will asked-- a question for a question.

“Not so far,” Hannibal answered, with a little chuckle. “But then again another opportunity to express that nature has yet to surface.”

“I’m not looking for another opportunity,” Will sighed. “You know, had you not involved him in our… relationship, this would not have happened.”

“Your statement implies a certain amount of remorse or that you might assume I harbor some. I do not,” Hannibal assured, exiting the freeway and turning down the road towards his home. Still a ways to go. “I was looking for a method to free myself of him. You did me a favor.”

“You wrapped yourself in him,” Will said, with a bitterness in his tone toward the subject. “What did you expect?”

“I did not expect him to try to kill you,” Hannibal answered, his tone serene. “I only granted him entry into my life because you had made your swift exit.”

“Fitting,” Will said, as the air around them grew sour with distaste.

“Jealousy is not becoming on you, Will,” Hannibal said, though he actually liked it, it was why he’d brought Tobias into the class knowing Will would be there, after all. “Surely you cannot harbor ill will towards me when I only had your words to go by. You made it clear you were not ready then. But we are here now. Together.”

“What would have happened if I didn’t care at all? What if I could not defend myself and he killed me? What then? What if you walked in on me dead?” Will was angry, suddenly, and unreasonably.

“As I stated, I had no idea he was going to attempt to take your life,” Hannibal reiterated, his tone more serious, eyes narrowed. “If you had died, he would have died, slowly and if you had not cared, then I would have received my answer as to your feelings. But you *did* care.” The doctor paused, taking a beat to think as he neared his home. “You did not share your history with Matthew, you’ve rejected me at nearly every turn until last night and yet I am not angry with you.”

“My past is my own,” Will swallowed, arms crossed over his chest. “I have a right to disclose when I decide I am ready. Should I not feel comfortable with you when I do? Not pressured on a first date?”

“And you did decide when you were ready,” Hannibal pointed out, pulling into his garage. He took off his seat belt and shut off the engine, turning to Will. “I did not pressure you to tell me anything, we both had compartments that needed unlocking, as well as curiosities, did we not? I have opened mine to you, just as you have done to me. It is your decision if you are comfortable with that and with me. I cannot decide for you. A partnership, if you recall… reciprocity.”

“I only meant how you went about with Tobias. You were upset I didn’t tell you sooner,” Will pointed out, fingers sliding to the door to push it open, and then he unbuckled. “I don’t want to argue.” Will sighed and got out. “Do you have tea?”

“Yes, I'll make a pot,” Hannibal said with a sigh and let it go. He got out of the Bentley and when Will was out, he armed the car, pursing his lips. The doctor strode over to his beloved,

and hooked an arm around his waist to pull him close, kissing him hard in the lips. “I love you, William and do not wish to quarrel with you either.”

Will stroked his fingers down Hannibal's face slowly as they kissed, sighing softly. Will only wished for them to get along, nothing less. “Agreed,” Will murmured.

Hannibal rubbed the small of Will’s back and nipped at his lips softly, eyes closing momentarily. He breathed in his lover’s scent and then released him, fluttering them back open as he smiled. “Come. Let’s have some tea.”

“Thank you,” Will said, taking Hannibal's hand as he counted the steps once inside.

“You’re welcome,” Hannibal replied, and locked the door behind them, walking with Will towards the kitchen as dogs wagged happy tails. “It appears as though you were missed.”

“That happens,” Will said, dropping down to pet the dogs, getting licked all over.

Hannibal nodded, "Yes, indeed." He walked over to fill the kettle and set it on the stove, turning back to watch Will with the dogs. "Are you hungry?"

“If you want to feed me, I could eat,” Will replied, standing once more, and walking towards Hannibal's voice.

"I'll feed you," Hannibal rasped, deep and throaty, walking over to Will to cup his jaw. Dark eyes drank in beautiful sea-blue and his heart pounded all over again. He was not unaware of the power the man held over him, he *surrendered* to it. "I am quite hungry, myself."

Will sighed heavily, and leaned in to kiss Hannibal deeply, drinking in his taste all over again. “Are you?”

"Yes, very," Hannibal smiled, over Will's lips and then backed off, not wanting to overdo things. The kettle whistled and he pulled down two cups to begin letting it steep, once he added the tea. "I'll start supper, your tea is on the counter, and will be ready to drink in a few moments."

Will hummed at the loss of contact, and nodded his head as he padded a hand on the counter and then walked forward until he felt the warmth from the mug. “Thank you.”

"Of course," Hannibal said, licking his lips as he watched Will. "I think pistachio crusted lamb chops ,served over polenta with a cherry port sauce, sounds like a perfect choice for our dinner tonight."

“That sounds wonderful,” Will said, gauging where Hannibal was before picking up his tea and shifting around to the breakfast bar to sit, starting to learn the Doctor’s house.

Hannibal hummed, and took a sip of his tea once it was ready, setting it back down to walk over and wash his hands. He then put on his apron and began pulling out the ingredients needed. “Do you think Abigail will actually accept my offer? That she will come stay for a few days?”

“I think so, if she thought it would put me at ease,” Will said, dunking the tea a little in the ball and then took it out to drink it.

“Very good,” Hannibal said, and then started preparing the meat to be cooked. “Would you like to resume our earlier conversation, or save it for after supper?”

"Now is as good a time as any,” Will said, and then took a sip of the tea. “Earl Grey?”

"You have an impressive pallet, yes," Hannibal answered, and combined the cherries and port in a sauce pot, letting it simmer. He'd already set about preparing the polenta, and chopping the pistachios. "I'll let you go first, then."

Will leaned over the counter with one elbow to it, chin resting in an upturned palm and he blew on his tea. “I don’t know that there is much else for me to say.”

"Then you have come to terms with everything we discussed in the car?" Hannibal asked, diligently working on the last bit of nuts. "No more questions begging to be answered?"

“I don’t know that there’s a point to continue discussing that of which we will only disagree. I pushed you away because I was scared to be in a relationship with someone who might be like Matthew. There’s a dark glimmer in you both that set me off.” Will set down the mug, hand wrapped around it for warmth.

"I have admitted to your initial question," Hannibal pointed out, reminding Will that he'd said yes to having murdered someone. He set the nuts aside and stirred the glaze before turning back to his beau, leaning closer to his face. "You're attracted to that darkness because you see it in yourself and that is what scares you most."

Only a little startled that Hannibal was so close, Will breathed out once heavily, and then sucked it back in slowly. “Are you *trying* to get me to leave?”

"Of course not," Hannibal answered, honestly and placed his hand on Will's bicep. "I'm merely being honest and seeing you as an equal, Will. I thought you would prefer that honesty, but as I've stated it is merely my perception."

“I do. And maybe I should be running, that fear is real, but you’re also right, I think I’m attracted to the darkness that envelops you both,” Will admitted, shifting his jaw.

Hannibal removed his hand and then went to turn down the sauce and put the lamb chops in to cook. He washed his hands and dried them, then walked around next to Will. "You have no need to run from me, Mylimasis. We can guide each other, and become something more, as one."

“Why did you kill the ones you have?” Will asked, turning his head in Hannibal’s direction, listening to him and his every move.

"Whenever feasible, I prefer to kill the rude," Hannibal explained, watching Will just as intently. "And other times, it just happened, be it through provocation or premeditated intent."

“So it’s quite a few,” Will mused, picking up his tea once more to sip it slowly.

"Yes," Hannibal answered, letting Will see him through the veil. He took his tea as well and took a drink, licking his lips. "Does this make you want to run again?"

“Considering the blood on my hands, I don’t think I’d have a right to. At least you aren’t assuming I’m incapable of it,” Will said, quietly, aware that Matthew thought Will to be a puppy, one that was only a wolf with him around.

"I see you, Will. We're just alike," Hannibal reiterated, and leaned in to kiss his jaw. He wanted his beloved to get in touch, and intimately with what was begging to be set free. "You are powerful, impressive and very beautiful. A glorious mixture."

“I wish I could *see* what you do,” Will said with a creeping smile that flitted over his features. “I’m not going anywhere.”

“Good, I’m both pleased and relieved to hear it,” Hannibal smiled, genuinely, and finished his tea, setting it back down on the saucer. He turned around to check on dinner and then took Will’s hand between both of his own. “But one doesn’t need sight to see just how phenomenal you are.”

“No?” Will smiled, finishing his tea, and set it to the side, fingers watching for the ledge of the counter carefully.

"No," Hannibal echoed, with a deep rumble and then righted his posture, smoothing down his apron. "We have about thirty minutes until dinner is ready."

“However will we pass the time?” Will asked, coy.

"I could think of a few ways, right here in this very kitchen, or perhaps over the bar," Hannibal answered, his accent thick.

“I do hope you have use of lubrication this time,” Will retorted, slipping off the stool. “I’m going to relieve myself first, the tea’s gone right through me.”

Hannibal went and retrieved some lubricant, after humming his response. He also removed his apron and shirt, stepping around the counter once he'd turned the food down to the lowest setting. Finally he removed his pants and underwear and leaned elegantly against the bar, waiting. Will returned only moments later, feeling the bar out until he came across Hannibal, hand on his bare hip.

“All set to go, are you?” Will crooned, nosing in against Hannibal’s neck, taking in his perfectly delectable scent.

"Mm, yes. Always,” Hannibal murmured and wrapped his arms around Will’s waist. He kissed him slowly, sucking his tongue and then moved down to his beau’s neck, scraping shark-like teeth against hot skin. “Will, I wonder, do you desire to switch things up a bit?”

“Do you mean to switch? Would like me to take you, Doctor?” Will asked, a flirty smile resting across his lips.

Hannibal smiled back, and licked his lips, hands roving up and down Will's muscular body. "Yes. If that would appeal to you," he answered, rumbling out the words in a seductive tone.

"Guide me," Will said, discarding his shirt and is jeans, boots left near the bathroom. "Show me how you want to be taken, how to touch you…"

"I want to watch you lose yourself, in me," Hannibal crooned, breathy and placed the lubricant into Will's hands as he ran his tongue from collarbone to below his ear. "Unleash that which you've been holding inside and tear me apart."

Will shivered, patting the counter that came to hip height on them both. "Up," he commanded, using the lube to coat his own cock as he waited for Hannibal.

Hannibal felt a decadent swirl of need in his belly, to his groin, as he seated himself on the counter as Will had instructed. Long digits curled under the edge of the surface, gripping, muscular thighs spreading in anticipation as his thick olive tinged shaft jutted up, hard and at attention. "I'm yours for the taking, Will."

Feeling around Hannibal's hip with his free hand, Will palmed down his thighs and then his cock, slowly, spreading Hannibal's legs apart as he got between them completely, and tugged him just off the counter. He used slippery fingers and gently pushed them into the doctor, a concentrated look on his face.

Breath hitching, Hannibal raised his hand to Will's shoulder, clutching. His broad chest expanded, skin fevered and tingling, heart thudding like a drum. He drank in every nuance of his lover, committing it to memory as taut muscle opened like a beautiful flower to give way to the succulent breech. "Perfect, Will. Just like that-"

Will closed his eyes, not that he needed to, but it felt right to relax and enjoy the moment, to feel Hannibal from the inside, spreading him open with deft fingers, slathering more lube to slick his way into his beau. Finally, he pulled them out, replacing with his cock, which he pushed in very slowly, careful against the first tight ring of muscle there.

Hannibal hooked his legs around Will's body, heels digging into his back as he braced himself on the counter with a strong, corded arm. He kept his eyes open, wanting to witness every glorious moment. It felt religious, being entered and claimed, giving a part of himself that he'd never given to another.

One hand went to Hannibal's shoulder, pushing down on him as Will started to thrust, slowly at first, working his wet cock into the doctor. His mouth dropped a fraction, bated breath spilling from pink lips in gentle huffs. "Hannibal…"

"Will..." Hannibal moaned, fiery eyes burning into his beloved as arched his spine against the cool counter. He slipped a hand in between their bodies to take his cock and start to stroke, languidly gliding the extra skin back and forth over the angry tip.

"Are you touching yourself?" Will asked, head dipped low, eyes open now as he started to pound into Hannibal, dragging his hips down over his own, impaling Hannibal with his thick cock.

"Yes," Hannibal answered, with a grunt and ceased the action. His balls bounced as he was taken, sparks of pleasure coursing through him as he was played like a beautiful instrument. Licking his lips, he dug his nails into Will's bicep, leaving crescent shaped indentions. "If I have your...*permission*."

“Yes,” Will growled out, getting heated and warm thoroughly, he pushed in harder, bucking Hannibal’s ass with his hips as his core coiled with pleasurable warmth.

Hannibal resumed stroking his cock, his lips curling into a snarl of passion as he was fucked hard. He groaned, deep and feral, increasing the rhythm to match Will’s perfect thrusting. “Harder, Will, give it all to me-”

Letting out more lascivious growl, Will started to pound, harder and faster, as the heat curled in his loins, threatening to burst forth all at once and without remorse. “Fucking… Hannibal-!”

The doctor tugged Will down, ravaging his mouth with hot, rough kisses. He bit the other's lower lip, drawing blood, lapping up the sweet, coppery nectar. "Yes," he growled back, maroon eyes lust blown and body tensing with the promise of his own release. "Come, William-"

A few more bucks of his hips wildly, and Will was coming in droves, his body pulsing to the heat of their coupling. He panted and groaned against Hannibal’s mouth. “Oh…”

Hannibal's heart pounded, erratically, vision blurring and going white. He shook as he came, hole clenching around Will's throbbing cock, hot ropes of release spilling from his own onto his chest between them. "Breathtaking, Will..."

Will was sure it wasn’t as ravaging as Hannibal had wanted, but he couldn’t exactly be sure. He placed a kiss on Hannibal’s chest, up to his lips. “I love you…”

It was perfect, for Hannibal, be it slow or rough, as long as it was with Will. “And I love you,” he murmured, carding through his boyfriend’s curls, wrapping around him. “That was magnificent.”

“Are we always going to fuck after an argument?” Will asked, a chintzy grin in place on his lips. He wouldn’t mind, honestly, so long as they always came back together.

“It was a most enjoyable way to repair the state of our relationship,” Hannibal chuckled, nosing under Will’s chin. “Wouldn’t you agree, Mylimasis?”

“Yes,” Will agreed, softly, swallowing once and then kissed Hannibal on the lips twice.

Hannibal hummed, eyes all but sparking with love and affection that wouldn’t be seen but rather felt in the way that held Will’s face, smiling over his lips. “Now I think we are both more than ready to have our supper, replenish the calories burned.”

Will hummed his agreement, and gently slid out of Hannibal, bending low to drag his jeans back up to his waist, tucking himself in. “It smells amazing.”

The doctor got down from the counter and snaked his arm around Will's waist, nosing under his ear. He kissed there and let him go. "Thank you. I'll go wash up and be right back."

Hannibal bent over to collect his clothing and then walked to the bathroom down the hall.

Will knelt once more to find his shirt and then slipped it back on, leaving it unbuttoned, before managing his way around the counter, carefully feeling out for the heate of the stove and oven.

Emerging once again, Hannibal walked out and licked his lips when he saw Will's impressive torso still delightfully exposed. He strode over, pants back on as well as shirt, but with the sleeves rolled up the elbows and squeezed his lover's round ass, passing him to pull out the food. "You are all too tempting like that, Will."

Will smiled, head turned toward the way he heard Hannibal. “Am I?” He wouldn’t know, but he was starting to learn the things Hannibal loved and liked about him, filing that information away for later use. He stepped out of the way, near the oven itself as he could feel the heat of it on his legs.

“Indeed,” Hannibal answered, with a little smile as he put on his oven mitts and pulled the food, setting it on the unoccupied burner. He then plated the pork and worked on the presentation, more for himself than anything else. “You’re a feast more decadent than anything I could hope to prepare.”

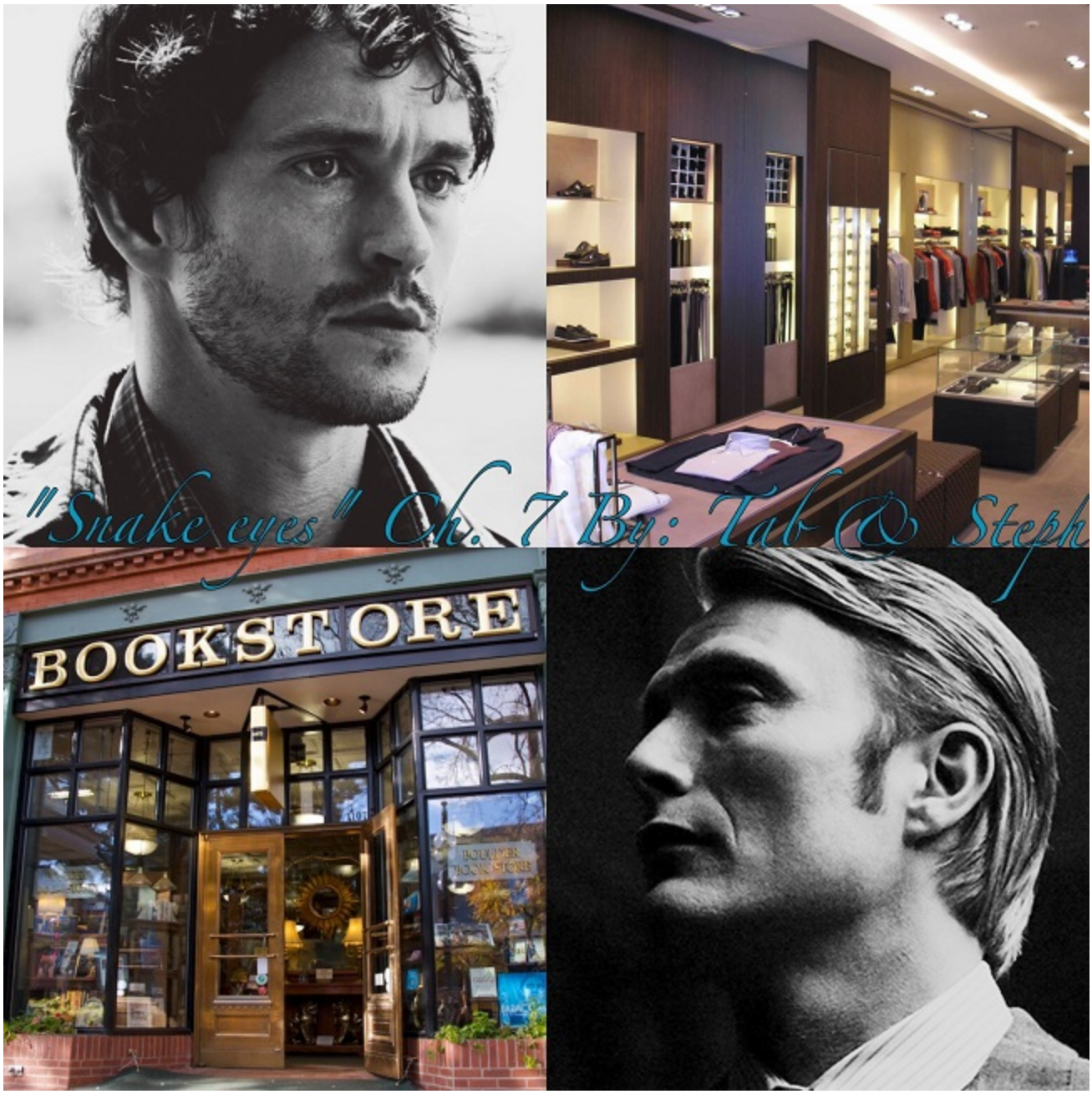
“I hope you don’t intend on eating me,” Will teased, ass hitting the other counter, and he leaned back against it, out of the way.

“Only in the pleasurable sense, and I warn you now, I have quite the appetite,” Hannibal grinned, speaking over his shoulder as he shut off the oven and stove. With both plates in hand, he took another moment to eye his handsome beau. “Shall we?”

“We shall,” Will said and reached for Hannibal’s arm, drifting off to the dining room to have their dinner.

Chapter 7

Chapter by 11Mydesign11, AchillesLament (11Mydesign11), Destinyawakened, Identically_Different



Abigail joined them that evening and then a few days later when nothing was heard from Matthew she went back to the dorms. Will figured he was overstaying his welcome by this time, too. He'd packed up the dogs things and his clothes on the seventh day, sure that going home would be fine, after all.

"Are you certain that you must leave?" Hannibal asked, walking over to touch Will's shoulder. He'd enjoyed having him there, and didn't want him to go home, for more than one reason. Even having Abigail around had been nice. "Perhaps you should stay for one more night, just to err on the side of caution, hm?"

“And then the next night for the same reason?” Will asked, turning toward Hannibal’s voice, into his touch. “Your house is… spacious, but the dogs love the open air…”

Hannibal sighed, quietly, but he knew Will was right. “Naturally, I wouldn’t press it,” he said, and stroked his lover’s cheek. “But I suppose you are correct. I’ll help you load the dogs into the car once you’re ready then.”

Will leaned and rested their faces together. “I do not want to overstay my welcome either,” he teased, knowing Hannibal would keep him if only Will asked.

"If that was your only reason for wanting to leave, then I would insist you stay,” Hannibal crooned, and kissed Will’s lips softly. “As such a thing is not possible. I’ve very much enjoyed having you here and hope you’ll come stay with me more often.”

“Perhaps during the week? If I keep the studio, it would be easier. We have the dinner party coming up soon…” Will noted, wondering if he should just stay another day. “Is your office on the same street as mine?”

“We do. The invitations have been sent,” Hannibal said, his mind running through the plans and the meal he would be preparing for the party. “It is the next street over, close to the french bakery on the corner by the light.”

“The crosswalk light?” Will asked with a little smile, though he knew where it was, honestly. “Maybe we’ll stay a few more days until after that. I can finish my sculpture while you’re at work.”

“Yes. That one,” Hannibal grinned, and nipped playfully at Will’s lips. He was elated at the decision that his beloved was going to stay longer, but tried to not sound overly enthusiastic. “As long as you’re certain, Will. You know that I am always happy to have you here. Likewise, you can make use of the room where you gave me my lesson, for your work.”

“Then you’d see my work,” Will said, realizing he had not worked on it in days and he really needed to. “And that’s surprise.”

“You cannot blame me for trying to sneak a peek,” Hannibal teased, hands gliding down Will’s back, pressing into the shirt covered muscles with strong doctor’s fingers. “The studio it is then.”

Will stopped packing all together at that. “We’ll go into town together then.”

“And I’ll come pick you up, once I’m off, if you’d like,” Hannibal offered, adding to the idea as he placed his hands into his pockets to check for his wallet and keys.

“That would be great,” Will said, hugging Hannibal once, kissing his neck.

“Then so it shall be,” Hannibal smiled, eating the affection whole and loving every bit of it. He kissed Will’s lips once more and then reached around behind where they stood, plucking his phone from the table to place it in his pocket. “If you are ready, then let’s be on our way, Mylimasis.”

Will made sure he had his wallet and keys, and then counted the steps to the garage, used to them now. “Ready.”

"Then off we go," Hannibal smiled and unlocked the car. He was thankful they'd already had breakfast and tended to the dogs, so they could get right to town without further delay. Once inside, did up his seatbelt, starting the car next and once Will was in he backed out to head towards town.

Will was dropped off at the studio, which he opened for the day and then kissed Hannibal goodbye. “I’ll see you when you are done for the day?”

After kissing Will back, Hannibal nodded, though more out of habit. “Yes, half past six today,” he answered, a smile in his tone as he looked at Will.

“Okay. I love you,” Will said, one more kiss placed to Hannibal’s lips, and then let the doctor go so he would not be late.

“I love you, William,” Hannibal called out, as Will exited. He sighed, contentedly, and once his beau was gone, he headed to his office.

***

Hannibal saw his last patient of the day and once they left, he sat at his desk, finishing a report, preparing to leave to go get Will.

"Mister Lecter, I presume," a voice said, causing Hannibal to look up and cease his writing.

"Ah, hello. You must be Matthew Brown. I wondered when you would pay me a visit."

Matthew smiled, eyes wild as he opened his arms wide, puffing out his chest. "That's me. In the flesh."

Hannibal canted his head and rose from his seat while the man was distracted basking in his own personal glory. "I presume you've come here about William?"

"He and I belong together," Matthew whispered, drawing out the word. "You don't know him, haven't spent the time with him that I have. So unfortunately, I'm going to have remove you from his life." He paused, rubbing his chin and then pointed, stepping closer a knife in his hand. "Well it’s….unfortunate, for *you*."

"What will you tell him happened to me? Will you be honest with him or merely treat him as if he were a baby bird, incapable of handling anything you did not, yourself, provide him?" Hannibal asked, eyes dead, no emotion as he spoke, head canted a tick.

"That’s not exactly for you to worry about, now is it, Mister Lecter. But if it makes you feel any better, he and I'll be *just* fine. I know what Will needs," Matthew said, softly, tone low, and then swiped the knife at Hannibal, without warning, who dodged it anyways by bending back and to the side.

Hannibal grabbed Matthew's wrist as it came towards him again and twisted it back, splintering bone to make the knife fall from his hands. He kicked it away, and pulled the man closer, gripping his shirt to gain momentum as he headed butted Matthew, making him tumble back.

Matthew gained his footing quick enough and stalked Hannibal, who was snarling, and ready. He lunged for the doctor, strong muscles flexing under his shirt as he shoved him against the pillar and hauled back, knocking the older man in the jaw with a sickening slapping sound.

Sniffing, teeth exposed and bloody, Hannibal slipped a scalpel from his suit coat, into his hand and thrust it below Matthew's adam's apple, and twisted with a growl. Blood splattered over his body, on his face, as the man stumbled back, eyes wide, finally falling to the floor and gurgling until the room fell silent.

Hannibal pulled a handkerchief from his pocket and wiped what blood he could, walking over to retrieve his weapon. Blood pooled around Matthew's head, neck and shoulders like a leaking fountain. It was beautiful, he mused and then realized he was late, by fifteen minutes in picking Will up. As such, he plucked his phone from his pocket and dialed his number.

“Hannibal?” Will answered on the other end, having left the studio, worried two minutes prior.

"Will, my apologies," Hannibal said, still a bit winded though not overly so. "Are you still at the studio? I had a bit of an unplanned visit to my office and that is the reason for which I am late."

“I just left, I’m heading to you, I think…” Will said into his phone, though now he’s become a little distracted, not exactly sure he’d headed in the right direction at all.

“Stay where you are, if you'd prefer and I'll come pick you up,” Hannibal suggested, wiping the rest of his blood from his face, removing his suit jacket.

“Are you okay?” Will asked, still walking the direction he was sure Hannibal’s office was from his studio, hoping he would not get turned around, so long as he wasn’t already.

“I am, yes,” Hannibal answered, and grabbed his keys, locking the office door and heading to his car. “What do you hear around you, I'll find you.”

“It’s quiet.” Will touched a wall near him hoping to find something he could describe to Hannibal. “Brick buildings.”

“I believe I know your location,” Hannibal said, going through his memory of the area. He got into his car, started it up once buckled and backed out. “Please stay where you are,

Mylimasis."

"Okay," Will said and hung up. He wasn't usually this disorientated, but he was worried about Hannibal, who was never late and called if he was going to be. Will pressed his back against the bricks, trying to figure out where he might be, but hoped Hannibal could find him, despite the dark.

Hannibal drove to a cluster of old brick buildings on the street over, since Will had said he'd only left a short time prior, and parked. He decided that on foot would be the best since, to his knowledge, there were no other businesses with that exterior styling beyond those. He walked past one, and when he didn't see Will, continued.

After another moment of looking down the dimly lit sidewalks, he finally saw Will, against the brick wall. "Will," he called out, softly and walked over to him, reaching his hand out to touch his arm.

Will reached and touched Hannibal's hand, and then took it. "I don't usually get lost, I was flustered when I hadn't heard from you…" Matthew still being out there and on the run meant that Will would worry, despite what he told Hannibal.

"I know, thank you, Mylimasis and I do apologize," Hannibal said, squeezing Will's hand. He started guiding them back down the sidewalk, towards the Bentley. "We need to go to my office, there is a matter which needs attending but I will explain in the car."

"A matter?" Will asked, a dull ache swelling behind his breast; something wasn't quite right.

"Yes," Hannibal answered, and unlocked the car, opening the door for Will once they'd reached it. He walked over, checking out their surroundings, which were fortunately mostly lack spectators and then got inside, closing the door. Once buckled again, he started the engine and back out to head towards the office. "The reason I am late, is that Matthew came to my office."

Will buckled, but froze right there, his breath stilling. Hannibal was alive, which could only mean that Matthew was not. "You… took care of him…"

Hannibal looked over at Will, gauging his reaction and then placed his large hand over his thigh. "I did. It would appear as though he had the same idea as Tobias."

"Seems as though," Will sighed, hands in his lap, curled together. "Two people in the span of a week will be curious."

"Tobias, as far as most are concerned, left the country to find muse," Hannibal explained, and thumbed over Will's hands a moment before taking the wheel as he rounded the corner. "As for Matthew, I do not expect the authorities will...kick up much of a fuss over an escaped inmate."

"What will we do with him?" Will asked, shaking a little at the thought. Matthew was crazy, yes, and they weren't good for each other, but he hadn't exactly deserved this. Jail was suitable.

Hannibal wanted to display him, personally, celebrate and have his work seen. A sculpture of his own and one that would stay etched in the proverbial stone of the population's mind. However, he thought it might be rude, to do such, given Will's shaking and overall response. "He could rest near Tobias, unless you have other ideas. You are, in a sense, his next of kin."

"Hardly," Will murmured, having never even gone to visit Matthew in jail, let alone write him, despite the letters that Abigail said he sent. "What do you usually do with the bodies?"

Hannibal smiled to himself at that, pulling back into the parking space at his office, taking off his belt and turning off the car. "Death, can be just as beautiful, if not more so, than life itself. It is a staggering reminder of our mortality," he explained, angling his body towards Will. "If I do not bury, I enjoy showcasing my art. Much like you."

"Won't you be caught?" Will asked, touching Hannibal's arm before he could get out of the car once more. The last thing they needed was separation.

"That was never a concern, though as with anything in life, there always lies a certain amount of risk," Hannibal answered, placing his hand over Will's, touched by his beloved's worry. "I would not wish for that to transpire now, especially. As such, we may bury him, if you'd prefer, Mylimasis."

"Okay," Will said, nodding, and squeezed Hannibal's hand.

"Good," Hannibal agreed and squeezed back, taking a quick look around before opening the door and exiting. He walked over and once Will was out, armed the Bentley and took his hand. "There are four steps, just at the front."

Will took Hannibal's arm and made his way up the steps as Hannibal guided him with word. "Thanks…" He hated having help usually, but he found Hannibal was never condescending with him.

"Certainly," Hannibal said, and walked with Will to the office door, which he unlocked. He stepped inside, the pool of blood much darker and bigger on the floor. "I'll just take a moment to clean my face, and gather what we need."

Will nodded, stepping into the room carefully, feeling out the walls and furniture carefully, not to slip on anything or anyone. "I'm sorry he came after you…"

Hannibal walked out of the private bathroom, having washed his face and hands, smiling over at Will, faintly. "It is quite alright. I suspected he might and now he is no longer a problem that you need concern yourself over."

"True," Will mused, sadly, finding Hannibal's desk, he sat himself on the ledge, perched there like some statuesque god.

The doctor reached Will, standing near him and touched his shoulder, dark eyes flitting over his beau's face. "Do you consider yourself to be in mourning?"

"I mourned Matthew years ago when he went to jail," Will conceded.

“I inquired because I detected a note of melancholy in your tone,” Hannibal explained and then leaned in to kiss his beau’s lips, once, softly due to the pain in his mouth and jaw.

Will reached one hand to Hannibal’s face, feeling him wince slightly against his own mouth. “Do we not mourn the dead we have known, whether we have let them go long ago or not? I wish he had lived and served his time, but he was too much of a free spirit, I don’t think he’d have made it.”

"We mourn those that once held standing in our lives, even if in the smallest of measures, yes," Hannibal agreed, not minding the pain. It was worth it, to be touched by Will. "The songs they sing resound in our hearts long after theirs have stopped beating."

“Yes, exactly,” Will said with a small sigh and then leaned up to kiss Hannibal’s lips softly. “This chapter has officially closed for me, and new one is just beginning.”

Hannibal hummed at that, also sighing at the sentiment and stroked Will's face. He was once again enchanted, emotion and awe surging through his body as he drank in the alluring nectar that was his beloved. "One that will see us through to the very end."

“What can I do to help?” Will asked, as though this were normal, as a week ago they were doing the same with Budge. Will never thought himself a killer, but in the here and now, he’d rather be a killer than not with Hannibal.

"If you wouldn't mind helping me get him wrapped up in the tarp," Hannibal suggested, having kept one for such an emergency in the closet in the bathroom that he'd brought out and placed in his desk chair. He took it in hand and righted his stance, walking to the body and stooping down as he opened it up with a sharp rustling sound.

Will slid off the desk and followed the sound, taking easy steps so he wouldn’t trip, still unfamiliar with the room. He got down on one side, and felt out Matthew’s rigid form and gently helped roll him over a few times onto the plastic.

Grunting, Hannibal used elastic cords to secure the tarp, his face serene as he did so. "Thank you," he said, his tone a bit rough from the efforts. "Now, to get to the car without being seen. Fortunately, it's late, and there is hardly anyone about."

“Okay,” Will said as they both took a side and slowly, carefully made their way out, Will letting Hannibal lead him, and taking his steps diligently. Finally, the body was loaded into the trunk, and not a soul was around.

Hannibal got into the car, and once Will was in, he headed off to the spot outside the city. After a half hour, and a mostly silent ride, he parked and got out to begin the task of burying the body with his boyfriend. It took hours, but the deed was done sometime after midnight, both of them covered in dirt and mud, but to fair, Will had been covered in clay to begin with.

"Do we need to go back and clean your office?” he asked, getting back in after brushing himself off, but to no avail.

Quite spent, Hannibal sighed, knowing he would, yet again, need to have his car detailed. That was fine and inconsequential. The Lithuanian started the car and threw the car into reverse to head back towards the city once more.“Yes, as well as burn our clothing once we return to my home.”

“At this rate I’m going to need new clothes,” Will teased, a light smile on lips, as he turned his head toward Hannibal. “From there we can focus on the dinner party.”

"I often refresh my wardrobe," Hannibal chuckled, eyes on the road, speaking in Will's direction. "Perhaps a shopping trip is in order before the dinner party, hm? Consider it part of the vacation package you said I could pay for."

“I did say that didn’t I?” Will licked his lips and rested his head back against the seat. “Maybe I’ll indulge you.”

“You did,” Hannibal said, pressing his palm over Will’s knee, lightly stroking there as the Bentley rolled down dark, familiar streets. “Tomorrow then?”

“Agreed,” Will said with a deep sigh. “I’m a terrible shopper, just ask Abigail.”

“Then I’ll steer you around the horrendous curves,” Hannibal grinned, glancing over at Will. “Or we can invite Abigail along as well, if you’d like.”

“She refuses to shop with me anymore,” Will sighed, shaking his head of dense curls.

"Surely it isn't that bad..." Hannibal chuckled, nearing town once again. He hung a left, and headed down the road his office was on.

“I’m terrible at deciding, mostly because I have no idea what the colors really look like, let alone on me,” Will explained.

“Ah, that explains it well enough,” Hannibal said, and took Will’s hand, lacing their fingers together. “I hope you trust my tastes enough to know that I would not guide you in the wrong direction in that sense, or any other for that matter. I only want what’s best for you, for both of us.”

“You’ll put me in stuffy suits I’d bet,” Will mused, but not ungrateful.

"A finely tailored, elegant suit for the dinner party," Hannibal offered, and kissed the back of Will's hand, pulling into the parking space of the office. "You always look striking, however."

“I have to take your word on that,” Will said. “Do you need me to help?”

“It is not a requirement, but would make things progress more swiftly, should you choose to, yes,” Hannibal answered, turning off the car and opening the door.

“What can I do?” Will asked as they got out and walked once more into Hannibal office, now well into the middle of the night. “You may have to direct me.”

Hannibal sprayed cleaner on the floor, once inside, on the blood stained area, and then retrieved two scrubbing brushes. He lead Will to the area and touched his shoulder. "If you could help me scrub the area, I would appreciate it."

“Okay.” Will scrubbed, though honestly he wasn’t sure how hard or how long he might need to, so he waited for Hannibal’s cues to move onto another spot, scrubbing away.

An hour later and the floor was clean and all traces of evidence were gone. Hannibal gathered the items to be burned and offered Will his hand. “Thank you, Mylimasis. Let's go home and get into bed, hm?”

Will nodded his head, and let Hannibal help him to his feet once more. “Bed sounds really good.”

“Yes, indeed it does.” Hannibal lead them out of the office and locked up, heading to the car. A bit later he pulled into the garage and parked.

“Would you like me to pour a nightcap, while you let out the dogs?”

“Sure,” Will said, whistling for the dogs as they entered the large house. Every single one came running and Will took the counted steps to the backyard to let them run free for a few.

Hannibal went to fill two glasses, whiskey for Will and bourbon for himself. He set them on the counter and walked outside, wrapping his arms around his beau from behind. “They are on the counter, once you are ready to partake.”

Will leaned back into Hannibal, always glad to feel his warmth, always glad to know he was there after so many years alone. “Thank you, I’ll let them run around a bit.”

The doctor placed a kiss on either side of Will’s neck, lovingly, and released him after a moment so they could go inside while the dogs sniffed about. Hannibal walked over and retrieved the two tumblers, handing one off. “You looked as though you were seeking wisdom from the stars, Will.”

“Did I? I’m not even sure what stars look like. I have an idea… but my ideas are mostly words and feelings,” Will explained, taking his drink.

“I meant metaphorically,” Hannibal chuckled, and took a slow sip of his bourbon, letting it warm his throat. “You looked pensive, nonetheless, in posture. However, I certainly understand your meaning.”

“And I was teasing,” Will said with another sip. “It’s been a long day.”

“It has, Mylimasis,” Hannibal agreed, resting against the counter, one leg crossed over the other at ankle. “Perhaps we’ll spare the deeper conversations for tomorrow then and just enjoy some tranquility, as well as one another’s company.”

“What deeper conversations are that?” Will asked, the dogs piling in behind them, going for the fireplace to settle.

Hannibal walked over and secured the back door, taking Will's hand to also go sit by the fire once he'd strode back over. "I'm a psychiatrist," he chuckled again, "there are always burning questions in my mind and often without any more cause than my own curiosity...which is not to say that I wish to psychoanalyze you, but more that it's difficult to turn off."

"I fear you'd be bored with me," Will said with a little smile, snuggling up with Hannibal there as he dropped his boots to the ground.

"Never," Hannibal promised, and wrapped his arm around Will, sinking back into the comfortable sofa with a breathy, quiet sigh.

"We'll see," Will hummed, sipping his drink, nursing it.

"Is that a challenge?" Hannibal teased, turning his face to kiss Will's jaw and then back to have more of his spirited beverage.

"If you're taking it as one. I'm not challenging you to anything," Will teased and finished off his drink, leaning over to set it on the coffee table he knew was there.

Hannibal let his hand follow the slope of Will's back as he bent over and rubbed above the waist of his pants, smiling. "Well, be that as it may, I fully intend on proving to you, that you could not be anything other than a charming, witty delight."

Will smiled and then stood, stripping out of his shirt. "We need to burn these, right?" he grinned, changing the subject smoothly.

The doctor noticed the change, but found himself unbothered once Will removed his shirt, reveal the well muscled torso that was hidden underneath. "Yes, that we do," he smiled and then stood, setting his drink down as well. He removed his as well, letting his beau go first.

"Just in the fireplace?" Will asked, reaching out to touch Hannibal's bare shoulder to steady himself as he slipped his pants off.

"Yes," Hannibal answered, staying still for Will. Once he was done, the doctor then removed his pants and boxers, along with his socks. His shoes had been slipped off prior.

Will tossed his things toward the warmth of the fireplace, standing before Hannibal in nothing but his boxers. "Did I miss?" he joked.

Laughing, Hannibal patted Will's ass three times and leaned in to speak over his ear. "Thankfully no." He then followed suit and gingerly placed the clothing to be burned in the hearth. He stoked the fire, insuring everything was in its place and sat down the pole, wrapping his arms around strong shoulders. "Bed?"

"Yes," Will murmured back, nosing against Hannibal's jaw, kissing there once. "I am exhausted.".

"Likewise," Hannibal smiled and then took Will's hand so they could go to bed. It was more out of affection than an act of guidance.

Will allowed it for this very reason, and once in the bed, he curled up to Hannibal and laid his head to rest over his heart, listening intently.

Hannibal wrapped his arms around Will and kissed his brow, listening to the rhythm of his breathing. "Goodnight, William, I love you."

“And I love you.”

***

The next morning Hannibal slipped out of bed and went downstairs to begin making coffee after he showered and dressed. He had crepes cooking and once they were done, he kept them on the warmer, walking the coffee upstairs to wake up his beau. "Good morning, Will," he said, softly, entering the room with a ready to drink cup. "Breakfast is ready and I've brought coffee for waking you up."

Will grumbled, having slept better than he usually did all week. He rolled over, listening to where Hannibal voice was coming from and turned his head toward it. “Morning. What’s the time?”

“A few minutes after nine,” Hannibal answered, smiling as he watched Will’s sleepy face turn to him. He walked closer, and sat down on the bed beside him, setting the coffee on the nightstand. “Coffee’s on the nightstand. I hope you slept well?”

“I did,” Will murmured and reached for the coffee as he sat up in bed, humming around the rim.

“Good,” Hannibal smiled, rubbing Will’s other arm. “We have a productive day ahead of us. I admit, I am looking forward to our outing.”

“I thought you might be,” Will said with a yawn and then sipped more coffee. “I’ll need a shower first, after we eat.”

“Yes and by all means, please do,” Hannibal said, and then stood, giving Will room to exit the bed when he wanted. “I hope you like crepes.”

“I do,” Will said, slipping out of bed, still in just boxers, and grasped his cup once more, following Hannibal’s voice.

Hannibal hummed, and walked out of the room, downstairs, towards the kitchen where the smell of the crepes hung deliciously in the room. “I took the liberty of letting the pack do their morning business about one hour ago.”

"Thank you. I didn’t mean to sleep in,” Will sighed, carefully making his way down the stairs, one hand on the rail, the other with his coffee in hand.

“You’re welcome,” Hannibal replied, as they reached the bottom of the stairs and over. “No need to worry. You needed the rest, I’m certain.”

“You don’t sleep much do you?” Will asked, padding into the kitchen over cool tiles, but he was warm enough in the well heated house.

“Not always. I am often awake early, if a patient should call and need me, or if I have things I must attend to,” Hannibal explained, plating the crepes. “Something else we have in common, though we lose sleep for different reasons.”

“I sleep walk sometimes,” Will said with laugh, sitting at the breakfast bar. “Ridiculous when it happens, I have no idea where I am when I wake up.”

“That, I do not do,” Hannibal said, smiling a bit though the notion concerned him. He turned around and announced the crepes, sitting down next to Will once he’d refilled their coffee. Teasingly, he touched Will’s thigh, briefly. “Perhaps I’ll have to tie you up, make sure you do not get away, hm?”

Will bit his bottom lip once at the thought and then picked up his fork. “Is that the only reason you’d tie me up?”

“There are a number of reasons why I might be inclined to tie you up,” Hannibal flirted and drank a swallow of his coffee before also picking up his fork. “Seeing you bound and writhing, being the primary, of course.”

“How often have you thought about that?” Will asked as he cut into the crepes as carefully as he could, trying not to make much of a mess.

“At least twice before now,” Hannibal answered, a smile on his face as he cut into the crepe and took a delicate bite. “Do you find the notion offputting or intriguing?”

“I’ve never been tied up for fun before,” Will admitted, getting a good bite into his mouth finally, holding the plate with one hand to keep it still as he went to cut another piece. “Could be interesting.”

“As long as you trust me,” Hannibal remarked, and wiped his mouth, taking another bite that he followed with coffee. He thought about the image, how beautiful Will would look that way, and felt a swirl of lust in his belly which he ignored,for now at least. “Something to contemplate, if nothing more.”

Will chuckled and stuffed two more bites into his mouth, chewing, swallowing. “Mm, it sounds fun. A real… test of trust for us both.”

“Indeed,” Hannibal chuckled back, after swallowing another bite. He licked his lips and angled his head towards Will. “Does this imply you wish to tie me up as well?”

"I could try, I don’t know that I’d be very good at it or get the same sort of thrill as you would,” Will suggested as he took one last bite, washing it down with his coffee.

“It is certainly not a requirement, but you might enjoy my limited mobility, having all of the power,” Hannibal offered, knowing that it would not be aesthetically appealing to Will due to

the obvious but the strength he'd seen in his lover indicated he might like the control. "My very life would be in your hands."

"Is it not now?" Will asked, coy, though he had thought of it, of course, he wasn't sure how good he'd been at actually keeping Hannibal tied up.

"It is," Hannibal answered, and leaned over to give Will a coffee flavored kiss on the corner of his mouth. His beloved was the only one he would allow to tie him up, and have total control. "My life, my heart, and my very soul, all belong to you."

"I hope you still think so after our dinner party," Will sighed, catching Hannibal's lips into a kiss.

Hannibal arched a curious brow, as he resumed eating and tilted his head a beat. "What would make you think I might not?"

"I'm not the social type. I can stand in front of people and I can do nothing, but talk to them?" Will laughed and then finished his coffee with a few swallows. "No."

Finishing his crepe, Hannibal took the last sip of coffee as well and gingerly wiped his mouth, setting everything down. "Your disdain for social interaction would hardly affect how I feel for you, Will."

"I can only hope," Will mused, and slipped his plate over to the other side of the counter, and got off his stool to wash the dishes.

Hannibal rose from the stool, and went over to assist, taking the drying towel in his hand. "You needn't hope. I promise that will not be the case, and I *always* keep my promises."

Will hummed at that.

Once they finished the dishes he went up and showered, coming down in clean clothes, jeans and a button down flannel shirt. He got Winston to bring him his boots and tied them on at the stairs.

Hannibal finished tidying up and slipped on his loafers, smoothing out his brown suit coat over the cream shirt and matching vest. He placed his wallet, keys and phone into his pockets and walked over to the stairs. "Ready, whenever you are, Mylimasis."

Will had everything else, and stood, touching the wall and then started for the door to the garage. "All set."

"Excellent," the Doctor answered, and once they were both inside the car, started off for the store he had in mind for Will's fitting.

The store was, from just the feel of it, bigger than Will thought it would be, full of classical music and stuffy people, smells that were nothing like the places he usually shopped. He stayed close to Hannibal, sunglasses on today to ward off anyone or to be asked stupid questions on what colors he preferred.

Hannibal laced their fingers together and lead his partner over to the tailor, giving him his name and requesting the suit he'd ordered already that would likely need to be altered. The man smiled and went into the back. "I was thinking something white, like the cool, beautiful snow. It will bring out the stunning sea-blue of your eyes," he said, trying to word it in ways that would have richer meaning. "I'll take your measurements myself, if you'd like."

“Would you prefer to take them instead of someone else touching my junk?” Will asked with a grin, mischievously.

Grinning back, Hannibal’s eyes narrowed playfully as he thrust a hand into his pocket. “Perhaps that is one reason, yes.”

“All up to you, Doctor,” Will said, trusting his beau completely, one way or another.

“Then I will gladly be the one to measure you,” Hannibal decided, though really the decision had already been made.

The clerk came back with beautiful suit and handed Hannibal the measuring tape, leaving just afterwards. The doctor thanked him, and they were alone once again. “Come, I’ll take you to the private dressing room.”

Will took Hannibal’s arm, letting his beau lead him. “I can’t believe it needs to be tailored…”

“It might not,” Hannibal began, closing the door behind them and locking it, surrounded by full length mirrors and a plush sitting bench. “We will try it on first, and see if there is anything that needs altering.”

“I would not be surprised if you stole some of the clothes and had them measured,” Will sighed, stripping off his jacket and then his shirt, along with the rest.

“I resent the implication, Will. Do you take me for a thief?” Hannibal joked, chuckling and folding the clothing that Will took off, placing it over the bench. He handed his lover the pants first, amused at just how annoyed his beau seemed by the whole notion of getting a finely tailored suit.

Will slid into the pants, sighing as he held on to the wall for support and then put the shirt on, carefully buttoning it up right. “You could be.”

“Is that so? Tell me, what traits do I possess that would make you think I am capable of thievery?” Hannibal asked, plucking the tie and preparing to hand it to Will.

“Oh, I’m teasing,” Will sighed, taking the tie from him, and doing fairly well to tie it, for a man who could not see.

Hannibal knew he'd been teasing of course but seeing as how Will was not loving the outing, he didn't point it out and nodded with a smile instead. "You look quite handsome, Mylimasis, even more with a new pair of shoes. A work of art all on your own."

Will had never liked clothes, only because he couldn't see what good they were, other than they clothed him. Suits were stuffy, his flannels were comfortable and soft. "Will it do for your dinner party?"

"Oh indeed it will," Hannibal murmured, running his fingers do the soft, fine fabric of the Gucci suit. He stared, awestruck, at just how magnificent Will looked in the formal wear. "I suspect the guests will hardly be able to look anywhere else, but at you."

"That would defeat the purpose of showing my work off," Will chided softly, teasingly. "This will do."

"As long as it meets your approval and you find it comfortable," Hannibal chuckled, hardly able to keep his hands off of his beau looking like this, but he managed to maintain control. "Or comfortable for the most part."

"It's fine. I can't see it, it fits alright, and it's not for all day. It'll work," Will surmised, not wanting to upset Hannibal over a suit anyway.

Hannibal was in an excellent humor, at least for the moment, breath practically stolen from his lungs as he gawked at Will. "Then it's settled and fortunately there are no adjustments needed. A perfect fit."

"You did steal," Will sighed, but with a smile on his lips. "Should I take this off?"

"Possibly," Hannibal chuckled, and then started helping Will remove the tie in answer.

"I don't want to get it dirty before the party," Will answered, quietly, and shrugged the jacket off, and then the shirt, the pants next. "You said something about shoes?"

"It is stain proof but yes, we needn't take the risk," Hannibal agreed and hung the items back up once Will had removed them. "There is a store, next to this one, where I would like to procure your shoes. If you do not mind."

"Lead the way," Will said, after he redressed, and took Hannibal's arm.

The doctor hummed, and walked over to the clerk, to pay for the three-thousand dollar suit with a swipe of his card. Once that was handled, he took the bag, and out of the store they went.

"Thank you for indulging me," Hannibal said, head canted over towards Will as they strolled towards the shoe boutique.

"I know you'll make it up to me," Will murmured, keeping up with Hannibal as they walked.

"In any capacity that you wish," the Doctor promised, reaching the door, which he then opened.

Following Hannibal through on being lead, Will stayed close, not touching anything. This place was almost very unfamiliar to him. "What sort of store is this? All shoes?"

“Yes, mostly,” Hannibal smiled. It was small but elegant. Not many could afford the fine shoes sold there so traffic was minimal. “There is a cobbler here that does excellent repair work.”

“I don’t need my shoes repaired,” Will said with brows furrowed at Hannibal. “I hope they have what you’re wanting me to wear.”

“No, you do not, you’ll be getting a new pair,” Hannibal assured, leaning in to kiss the corner of Will’s worried mouth. “They have a few pairs waiting for you to try actually. The cobbler mentioned was my way of creating the feel and ambiance, if nothing else, Mylimasis.”

“I’m not sure what I’m supposed to feel from that,” Will murmured counting steps he knew he wouldn’t need, as he never planned to come back on his own.

“Do not worry, Will,” Hannibal offered, kindly, leading them to the back room as the doctor gestured to the store attendant to bring out the shoes that had been set aside. “In the spirit of your sacrifice here with me today. I wonder, would it please you to take me on one of your fishing expeditions?”

“That’s what your bargaining with now? I fly fish, mostly, that means you’d have to get into the water, up to your knees,” Will said, sitting down.

“It is hardly a bargain as you are already here,” Hannibal chuckled and placed his hand on Will’s thigh as he sat down next to him. “I meant it more as a token of reciprocity, and of my love. I am willing to wade into the waters, for you, William.”

“How chivalrous of you,” Will said, untying his boots to ready his feet for shoes far more uncomfortable.

Hannibal looked over at Will, trying to gauge if that was sincere or snarky. Nonetheless, he took it as sincere. “I do my best,” he smiled, and clasped his hands together in his lap. “I thought we might purchase something for Abigail, after we leave here. What do you think?”

“Such as?” Will asked, resting a hand on Hannibal’s knee, as if to try and keep him close.

“Ah, I believe I hardly know her well enough to presume,” Hannibal mused, and placed his large hand over Will’s as he contemplated. “She does not seem like the traditional young woman of her age. As such, I will need your assistance in selection something appropriate to her tastes.”

“Are we talking clothes or gifts?” Will asked.

“A gift,” Hannibal answered, head canted in his beau’s direction. “Clothing is far too personal for a woman of her age. Perhaps a leather journal or something of that nature?”

“She like scarves,” Will suggested. “Alana has bought her a few, says Abigail likes to cover the scar on her neck with them. Uh…” Will licked his lips thoughtfully. “But a journal might work, too.”

“Both, then,” Hannibal offered, and brought Will’s hand to his lips to place a kiss there. He was curious about the scar as well as the mental state of the girl, but before he could ask, the clerk entered with the selection of shoes. After saying a thanks, the young man left again, and the doctor turned back to his lover. “Shall we try these on?”

“By all means, my feet oblige you,” Will said with a snarky smirk, teasing his beau. He wiggled his toes. “Be my guest.”

With a quiet laugh, Hannibal took the sock provided and leaned over to slip it onto Will’s foot. He then took the first shoe, a white patent loafer to match the suit and slid it on. Once it was, he did the other food. “Please stand, and let me know how that feels.”

Will stood, with little help, and cringed. “How is it supposed to feel?”

“It should not elicit the face you have just shown,” Hannibal said, furrowing his brow. Nice shoes were often not overly comfortable, but they shouldn’t induce pain either. Not right away. “We’ll try the next pair, hm?”

“A little tight is all. I’m used to my worn in boots,” Will said with a little smile in Hannibal’s direction.

"A valid point, yes," Hannibal agreed, smiling once he saw Will's. "You're certain you do not wish to try the other pair? These do look rather stunning, I must admit."

“It’s only for a little while,” Will sighed, “I trust your judgement.”

“Thank you, William,” Hannibal replied, and touched Will’s arm. “Then we’ll take these.”

“Okay.” Will sat back down, one hand on Hannibal’s shoulder as he lowered himself. He took the shoes off handing them to Hannibal. “Anything else?”

“I believe that is all, as far as your outfit is concerned,” Hannibal answered, placing the shoes into the box, carefully, wrapping them up. “Abigail’s gift next or later?”

The clerk reentered at Hannibal’s gesturing, and the doctor handed him his card.

“Now is fine. We’re out,” Will said, putting his boots back on while Hannibal paid for the shoes.

“Then that is what we shall do,” Hannibal said, taking the card back and signing. He thanked the man as he walked off and the elegant man stood once more, taking Will’s hand.

“What’s around here? I don’t think I’ve ventured in this side of town before,” Will murmured as they walked out together, into the warmth of the sunny day.

“A bookstore, which would house the leather journals I mentioned,” Hannibal answered, rubbing his thumb in circles against Will’s palm. “A cafe and a music store, as well as a very well stocked antique shop.”

“Bookstore,” Will replied, smiling toward Hannibal as the wind whipped around his curly, brown locks.

Hannibal hummed, looking over at Will and fully allowing himself to appreciate his beau’s beauty. He steered them in the direction of the bookstore, squeezing the hand he held. “Perhaps a fountain pen set to go with the journal…”

“What’s the difference between that and regular pen? Nicer? I mean, does it write nicer?” Will asked, having heard of them of course, but never sure why they were popular with some.

"Yes. Fountain pens lend a more calligraphic, penmanship quality to the writing. Furthermore, the ink is less amenable to forgery simply because it has a propensity to become a mess when interfered with," Hannibal explained, with a soft chuckle. "It is suited to unhurried writing, allowing the person utilizing it time to clearly put down their thoughts."

“She’ll love it,” Will said, sure that Abigail would enjoy a gift like that, unlike himself. “See, with braille, it’s just all the same, there’s nothing fancy…”

“Good,” Hannibal smiled, nearing the store.He truly wanted to do something nice for the young woman, as well as garner more favor. “Have you many books at your home?”

“I mostly get those books on tape,” Will said as he was lead into the shop. “It’s easier, I can listen to them on my phone for longer car rides.”

“Yes, that is certainly a better and more enjoyable method,” Hannibal agreed, taking in the smell of leather and bound books, which was always something he found pleasing to his senses. “The journals are in the far corner.”

“Left or right?” Will asked, but let Hannibal lead him, taking his arm.

“Left,” Hannibal answered, quietly, as he guided them carefully through aisles and past customers.

“Thanks.” Will touched the shelves as they passed, loving the feel of books even if he couldn’t read them.

“You’re welcome,” the Doctor hummed, taking everything in as the neared the back corner of the store. Rows of leather journals were stacked on the shelves, some made to seem weathered, others more modern in appearance. “There is quite the selection. More than I would have imagined.”

“She likes green, like a deep forest green, or so she tells me,” Will said with a smile. “Something in that color maybe?”

“Let me see if there is something like that,” Hannibal replied, musing as he looked over the options. At last he found one, fortunately it was the exact shade Will had suggested. He placed it into his beau’s hands to let him feel the smooth, yet crinkled texture. “This one looks nice. Aged buffalo leather. It should last for years to come and form a nice patina with use.”

“A what?” Will chuckled, and held the journal, thumbing over the pages gently. It felt wonderful to the touch.

“Patina,” Hannibal said again, with a chuckle of his own, watching Will as he felt and explored the journal. “It’s a darkening of the leather. Quite beautiful in appearance as most would agree. Nonetheless, it will last her a long time. An excellent piece.”

“She’ll love it,” Will said, hopeful, aware that Abigail wrote a lot at Alana’s discretion.

“Good,” Hannibal smiled and leaned over to kiss Will’s lips. “Now to find the perfect fountain pen set to go with it.”

“That's all you,” Will said against Hannibal's mouth, touching his hips with one hand.

Hannibal discreetly ran his tongue over Will’s lower lip and then tugged it into his mouth, hand around his waist. “I suppose it is,” he murmured, breath hot against his lover’s succulent pout. “I believe there are some sets in the front of the store.”

“Near the checkout?” Will asked, stifling a groan.

“Yes,” the Doctor answered, and forced himself to back away, taking Will’s hand once more to lead them to the pen sets.

They were insatiable for each other and there was little to be done about that right now. Will smiled, “What’s after this?”

“Coffee?” Hannibal asked, flattening out his attire as they walked towards the front together, fingers laced. He felt as though he was the luckiest person in the store, the world, to be seen with a breathtaking vision like Will Graham.

“I could definitely use more coffee,” Will sighed, content. He was not thinking about the two bodies he help to bury, nor the one he killed.

"Likewise," Hannibal agreed and began looking at the pens. He found a set that was a deep green with gold embellishments. "I've found the perfect set to go with her journal."

Hannibal smiled and gestured to it so that the clerk could remove it from the case. He turned to Will once more. "If there's nothing further, I'll pay and we can procure coffee."

Will nodded, knowing Hannibal's tastes would suffice for Abigail. “Sounds good.”

After paying, Hannibal clutched the bag and lead them out of the store, towards the coffee shop. "They have excellent croissants here. One of the few items I will consume outside of my home."

“As good as the muffins from my usual place?” Will asked, mostly teasing since he had never heard of Hannibal consume much outside of his own kitchen.

“You’ll have to be the judge and let me know,” Hannibal chuckled, looking over at Will as they neared the door. He knew exactly how the croissants were prepared at this particular

establishment, having spent time conversing with the owner.

Will waited for the door to opened for him, and then stepped inside once more, taking in the fresh baked goods aroma. “Smells amazing.”

“Doesn’t it?” Hannibal hummed and then greeted the man behind the counter in French, who smiled at him in a friendly manner. He walked with Will up to the counter, turning towards his beloved, debating on offering a menu in braille but decided against that. “They have a variety of coffee, from plain to eccentric.”

“I just like plain,” Will said, smelling out the pastries as they stood there. He turned his head to the man and spoke very slow, broken French to him, asking for the cranberry muffins he could smell.

Hannibal ordered the same, but a croissant instead of the muffin and then paid, once more offering a small smile to the attendant. They were told to have a seat and it would be brought out shortly. As such, the doctor lead them to a table near the window, which was mostly for himself but it also allowed for more warmth. “I would still very much enjoy taking you to Paris, Will.”

“My French only gets me through New Orleans at best,” Will said, with a smile, following Hannibal and taking the seat pulled out for him.

“Ah, but I would be with you, and together we could conquer all of Paris,” Hannibal chuckled, and then sat down. He clasped his hands together on the table, securing the bag with the shoes and the gift for Abigail out of the way as he looked out the window for a moment, and then returned his gaze back to Will.

“Maybe some day,” Will said with a fond smile toward Hannibal. “I hope you’ll love the piece I am working on, it’s almost finished.”

Hannibal smiled back, just as fondly, the emotion in his tone when he spoke. “Yes, maybe some day,” he echoed back and then thanked the barista who brought over their orders. He stirred his coffee, and licked his lips thoughtfully. “I have no doubts, William. I am very eager to have it revealed to me.”

“It’s been sort of… self accepting project, a little soul searching, too,” Will teased, knowing Hannibal could not wait to see it.

“Is that so?” Hannibal said, taking a sip of his coffee once it cooled enough to do so. He gently placed the spoon onto the napkin. “And what did you find hidden in the depths of that beautiful soul, hm?”

“You’ll have to wait and see. I’m a little nervous about it,” Will said, though he knew it wasn’t his soul he was going to be baring to the world.

“I promise to be patient, and behave myself until then,” Hannibal hummed, and then took a bite of the croissant, shark-like teeth tearing through the flaky bread.

Will chuckled, and tore apart his muffins into bite sized pieces before placing it into his mouth. He then sipped his coffee, forgetting he didn't ask for sugar and made a face.

Hannibal arched a brow at the face but quickly surmised what was lacking. "One moment, I'll go retrieve some sugar," he said and then rose to go do just that. A moment later and he returned with sugar, and cream, just in case. "There we are, this should make your coffee a bit more drinkable."

"I don't mind it, but I'd like to enjoy it," Will chuckled, opening his coffee carefully, he tore the little sugar packet open and dumped it in.

"As a rule yes," Hannibal laughed, quietly, and added a bit to his own as well, stirring it up. He took another bite of his croissant and hummed. "Should we take Abigail her present after this? I do not know her schedule."

"She should be done with school for now. You could text and ask her? I'm sure she won't mind, unless you prefer to wait," Will said, not sure what occasion Hannibal had in mind for the gift, if any at all.

"Now is as good of a time as any," Hannibal answered, merely wanting to garner favor with her, or more of it, in any case. He pulled out his phone and unlocked it, pausing before he typed out the message. "Unless she will be in attendance at the unveiling during the dinner party?"

"Uhm," Will pressed his lips together, head canted. "She's invited, but she may or may not be there, she's aware of the subject matter of my piece."

Naturally, the question had been a sneaky way for Hannibal to get a tid bit more of a hint in reference to the piece itself but he also truly wondered if Abigail would be in attendance, He nodded, and sipped more of his coffee. "Well, then I would suggest we take her gift today, just incase she does not come to the party."

"You could ask her if she is, she might just decide to leave before I unveil, as to not make you uncomfortable," Will said with a tease, clearly aware Hannibal was fishing.

"Ah yes, we would not want me uncomfortable," Hannibal teased back, and placed his hand over Will's, rubbing his thumb over his skin. "I'll text her and inquire."

Hannibal removed his hand and sent her a text message, hitting send. He placed the phone back into his pocket and resumed eating. "And now we wait, as they say."

Will drank his coffee silently and Hannibal's phone dinged with a reply, a message confirming she'd be there for dinner, at least.

"And?" Will inquired.

"She'll be at dinner," Hannibal answered and quickly sent back a reply stating they looked forward to seeing her then. "So I suppose if there is nowhere else you want to go, we can head back to my place."

“We do need to plan the dinner for the party,” Will suggested.

“I would be delighted to have your assistance in that regard,” Hannibal crooned, finishing his coffee. He’d made some of the plans already, of course, but there were still a few things that needed to be sorted. “Do you have a preference as to where your work will be displayed? In the the backyard perhaps? The whole party could be outdoors.”

“So long as there is no rain or snow,” Will said, head canted slightly at the thought. “I wouldn’t know the best spot otherwise.”

Hannibal pulled his phone back out and quickly checked the weather for day of the party. “It is supposed to be perfect for such an outdoor event. According to my phone.”

“Okay then. That’s settled,” Will said, finishing his muffin, and then his coffee with a hum. He wasn’t looking forward to a dinner a party, but if it meant some of his work might be bought or garner at least a new customer, he would prevail through.

“Simple enough,” Hannibal smiled, and finished his croissant, wiping his mouth. He was looking forward to it, as always. It was a chance to show off not only his beau, but Will’s talent as well. “I have the menu planned, of course and the party, as you know, will be formal.”

“I should hope so after the suit we just bought,” Will said, with a grin, shaking his head. “You’ll have to be charming for me.”

Hannibal grinned back, running his tongue over his teeth as he took ahold of the items they purchased once more. “I’ll do my best. Only for you, Mylimasis.”

Chapter 8

Chapter by 11Mydesign11, AchillesLament (11Mydesign11), Destinyawakened, Identically_Different

Will finished his sculpture just in time for the party, having had to make a few last minute detail changes, not sure he liked them. He fired it up and had Abigail help him cover it and bring it to Hannibal's. She made a few snarky remarks about it, as he assumed she should, but she was supportive either way. They put it in the back with his other pieces, leaving it covered.

"I expect it to stay covered," he told Hannibal, warning him about peeking.

"I promised I would behave myself," Hannibal assured, everything set up, the staff he'd hired waiting and the food prepared. He was dressed in a black tuxedo, hair meticulously styled to the side and with the cologne Will liked. All that was needed now, was for the guests to arrive. "You look stunning in this, I must tell you again."

“I have heard nothing but monkey suit comments from Abigail,” Will sighed, hands pressed against Hannibal’s chest.

Hannibal laughed at that, and shook his head, wrapping his arms around Will's shoulders. "She enjoys having a go at you," he said, and then leaned in to kiss his handsome beau twice. "I assure you, you look nothing of the sort."

“No?” Will smiled and rested their profiles together, hands slipping to Hannibal’s waist. “I’m nervous.”

Cupping Will’s jaw, Hannibal caressed his boyfriend’s cheek bone and took in a slow breath, smiling fondly. “You are handsome, talented, and it should be over relatively quickly, hm? I will be right beside you.”

“You’d better be,” Will whispered, pressing their lips together.

“Always,” Hannibal whispered back, in between increasingly heated kisses. He pulled back and grinned over Will’s tempting mouth. “The challenge will be keeping my hands off of you during the party.”

“You are allowed to touch me any time you like,” Will whispered between them, happy to just be here with Hannibal, and forget the people arriving soon enough.

“I will likely take you up on that offer,” Hannibal murmured, letting his hands slide down the soft fabric of Will’s white suit, grasping his ass since noone was around to see. The staff was in the kitchen at the moment. “Especially with you looking as you do.”

“You can ravish me later. You may want to even more so once you see my latest,” Will whispered, mischievously.

"Is that so?" Hannibal grinned, licking his lips. "I am even more curious now, Mylimasis, as I cannot fathom wanting you more than I do at this very moment."

“Well, to be fair, that is my hope. It could me horrible garbage for all I know, as Abigail is the only one who has seen it and she told me refused to look,” Will chuckled, nuzzling his nose against Hannibal’s.

“I am positive it will be perfect and exquisite, just as everything you’ve done has been,” Hannibal promised, and nuzzled back, utterly and totally in love with his beau. “I suppose you will make me wait until the end of the event to reveal what you have created. Keep me in torturous suspense?”

“I’ve thought about it. I suppose I should ask you how you feel about certain things, but you do attend a class where I’m seen nude for an hour,” Will snarked, and just then the doorbell

rang.

Hannibal gave Will a look, and shook his head. "That I have. Perhaps we can continue this conversation after the party," he suggested, putting the pieces together. He kissed his beau once and took his hand. "Shall we go greet our first guest?"

“Yes,” Will said taking Hannibal’s arm to be lead.

Hannibal hummed, and walked Will inside, where he saw the butler hanging up the man’s coat. “Ah, Doctor Chilton, so good of you to come. I’d like for you to meet my partner, Will Graham. It’s his art you will be seeing today.”

Frederick smiled, already aware of the fact that Will was without sight and extended his hand. “A pleasure, Mister Graham. Doctor Lecter speaks very highly of you and your work.”

Will smiled toward rhetoric man's voice, able to discern from his lilt that he'd be handshaker and offered his own, awkwardly, meeting the man's after a few fumbles. “I'm sure he does. Very nice to meet you, Doctor Chilton.”

Chilton shook, gently, but with feigned confidence and let go, taking a glass of champagne as it passed by him and looked at it speculatively before sipping. “I have to say, Mister Graham, I'd love the opportunity to speak with you more later. It would be fascinating to hear what goes on in your mind when you create your work,” he gestured, looking off to the side almost nervously before looking back at the sculptor to smile and stand tall. He was aware of Hannibal watching him with amusement. It unnerved him for some reason. “Thought processes and all, things of that nature. If you’d be willing?”

“Of course, not sure you'd find it that interesting,” Will said taking his hand, latching on to Hannibal's arms once again.

"In my experience, everyone has something interesting hidden away," Chilton chuckled, a bit pompous though not unkindly.

The doorbell rang then, another guest, and Hannibal squeezed Will's hand reassuringly. "Please, Doctor Chilton, make yourself comfortable. We must greet the other guests."

Chilton smiled, and nodded, walking out into the backyard.

"Charming, isn't he?" Hannibal chuckled, not sincere at all as the butler opened the door to reveal a Miss Beverly Katz.

“Buckets of charm,” Will said, under his breath.

Hannibal grinned, and thumbed Will’s palm, a quiet laugh escaping his lips once more as the beautiful woman walked in. “Miss Katz, thank you for coming to our little party. This is Will Graham, the reason we are gathered today, as I’m sure you recall.”

“Miss Katz,” Will said offering his hand. “It's a pleasure.”

"Well look at you," Beverly grinned, a sassy lilt in her tone. "Nice to meet you, Will. Call me Bev." She shook his hand and then let go, patting his arm, taking a look at the house. "This sure is a swanky place, Doctor. Has your name written all over it."

“Thank you, Miss Katz,” Hannibal smiled, faintly, and then amended his statement. “Forgive me, *Bev*, I meant.”

“No problem, but you should know better by now,” she chided, playfully, and then took the champagne handed to her as well. “So, Will, where are these masterpieces your *beau* brags about?”

“They're out back,” Will said with a grin. “But everyone gets to see after dinner.”

“Making us all wait,” Beverly laughed, and then smiled at Hannibal. “Alright, well I’ll leave you two to it and catch up with you later.”

“Dinner will be served once the rest of the guests arrived,” Hannibal said, with elegant charm. Once Miss Katz walked off, he touched Will’s shoulder. “Everyone is most eager, Mylimasis.”

“I don’t even know these people. How do you know Beverly?” Will asked, curiously.

"I met her through Alana," Hannibal answered, looking out into the backyard, to see the two guests conversing and sipping champagne.

“Oh…” Will said, shrugging one shoulder. “I should have know. FBI?”

"Yes," Hannibal answered quietly, clearly not bothered by the association. "It’s always fascinating to me to get to see behind the curtain."

“Do they ask for your help?” Will asked, curiously.

"I have assisted once before," Hannibal answered, though it had been a while ago. "Though sadly my help lead them to a dead end."

“What case?” Will queried as they stood conversing to themselves.

"The Chesapeake Ripper case, which is still unsolved," Hannibal answered, with a little smile.

“The killer that paints his victims as art?” Will mused, mostly, listened to all the news on the cases.

"Yes, one and the very same," Hannibal agreed, watching Will as he contemplated. The doorbell rang again but this time, the Doctor opted to let the butler handle them for the time being. "He will only be caught if he wishes to, it would seem."

A dark thought scurried through Will’s mind, remembering a conversation he and Hannibal had a few nights ago. He licked the inside of his teeth. “Why do you say that?”

"This killer is one that cannot be termed and if the FBI thinks they are close to catching him, it will only be because that is what he wants them to think," Hannibal explained, placing his hands behind his back as the guests all started to mingle outdoors with the two already there.

Every piece of art outdoors had a cloth over it so no one could see them just yet. It was the only way to keep guests away until ready.

“I see….” Will said, keeping close to Hannibal, quieter now.

"Yes," Hannibal said, licking his lips thoughtfully. "But as I said, that has been some time ago, since I did my best to make a profile of this killer."

“One that would very much not lead to you, I’m sure,” Will said with a shift of his head, his words quietly whispered.

Hannibal canted his head, and smiled, feeling nothing but admiration for his cunning boy. "Precisely," he whispered back, no longer denying such things to his beau. "The search continues."

Will hummed, and took Hannibal’s hand once more, lacing their fingers together. “Perhaps you should keep your artistry to a minimum.”

"I have hardly killed anyone since we've grown close," Hannibal smiled, speaking in Will's ear as he gently squeezed his lover's hand.

“Shall I remind you of Matthew,” Will whispered, sighing at the way Hannibal’s voice lilted in his ear pleasantly.

"No," Hannibal murmured, and wrapped his other arm around Will's waist. He placed a small kiss on the soft alluring lobe of his beloved's ear before teasingly adding, "I did say *hardly* killed."

“You are lucky I love you,” Will whispered and turned his head to kiss Hannibal on the mouth, touching his cheek with one hand.

Hannibal let his lips linger, kissing him once more and smiled, gazing into Will's eyes even if they couldn't look back. "Yes, and I thank the stars for that very fact, every single night and day."

“Good,” Will said, and then pulled back a little. “I am starved.”

"The guests are likewise, I'm sure," Hannibal nodded, taking a breath to focus on the party. "I'll go help the staff bring out the food, if you’d liked to begin mingling a bit more with our guests?"

“Mingle?” Will sighed, and Abigail came up next to him to take his arm.

“I’ll escort you out,” she said, winking at Hannibal as she lead her father out to where more new people were gathering, chattering among themselves.

Hannibal was grateful for it, as he knew it wouldn't be the highlight of Will's evening. He still needed to give Abigail her present as well, but that could wait.

The Doctor went into the kitchen and began helping. It wasn't but a few minutes later and the staff, along with Hannibal began bringing out the food which he announced, standing in front of everyone with a glass of wine in hand. "And remember, nothing is here is vegetarian," he smiled, as they applauded his beautiful creation. "Before we eat, a toast to my William and his remarkable talent."

Will ducked his head and lifted his glass. “Thank you,” he said, bashfully, not enjoying so much attention, nothing like art class.

Hannibal, naturally, was trying to win the guests over, so they would buy Will's work, though really he knew the pieces would sell themselves. He raised his glass, along with everyone else and they all drank and started to eat.

The doctor walked over and sat at the table that was just for Will, Abigail and himself, the food already in place. "The party is a success so far. I do hope you like the menu I've selected."

“Everything you make is wonderful,” Will said, forking some of the supper into his mouth after negotiating it with his knife first.

"Thank you," Hannibal smiled, and then extended that to Abigail as he took up his fork. He took a slow bite, humming around it and wiped his mouth. "Abigail, I hope you find it to your liking as well," he said, loading his fork again. “Also, before you leave tonight, there is something we wanted to give you.”

“Give me?” she asked, forking some into her mouth as well with a hum. “It’s delicious, as always.”

“Hannibal bought you something,“ Will reiterated, murmured around his fork.

Hannibal had planned to give Will credit as well, but nodded all the same. “Thank you, and yes, just a simple gift that I hope you might find useful,” he explained, sipping his wine a moment. “Or you could consider it a post finals congratulations present if nothing else.”

“Well thanks in advance,” she grinned, “and really the food is great.”

“It is,” Will agreed, taking another bite, and then some of the wine.

“You’re welcome, Abigail,” Hannibal said, canting his head proudly, just a fraction. His eyes twinkled with delight as he hummed his thanks to them both and continued eating.

Once they were done eating and conversing, along with the rest of the guest, Hannibal looked at Will and touched his arm. "Are you ready to do the reveal, Mylimasis?"

Will swallowed hard, a little nervous, and nodded. “Yeah.” He reached for Hannibal’s hand, only now very aware of what he was going to be revealing. He took the covers off all the pieces but the newest one, all busts and some animals. Finally he got to the last one. “This is

piece I was inspired to do because of Hannibal, who has been a huge role in my life lately. It required a little self exploration and soul searching. I apologize now if you're all offended."

With that, Will tugged off the last cover, revealing a full sized sculpture of himself, head-to-toe, nude. It looked like the statues of old Roman days, but less chipped and aged. Every detail was there, right down to patches of hair, lines, veins, and scars.

Hannibal's lips parted in awe, his eyes watering subtly at the sheer and utter beauty of the sculpture. It was flawless, and he squeezed Will's hand, pulling him in for a quick, appreciative kiss. "It is magnificent. A perfect liking and a testament to your talent."

"I'd like to take that home," Beverly said, with a grin, the rest of the guests also finding all of Will's work outstanding. "How much for that piece, Will?"

Will flushed, crimson in color. That spread over his cheeks and ears, making his suit even more perfect against its tone. "It's… uhm, a gift actually, for Hannibal."

"Well aren't *you* lucky, Doctor," Beverly smiled, walking over without thought that she might be interrupting their moment. She looked at the sculpture closer, unabashedly. "Very lucky. Good work, Will."

Beverly patted his arm, and then went and sat back down as Hannibal chuckled and hooked his arm around Will's waist.

"A gift I am most grateful for and will treasure always," he said, thoughtfully, and then turned to face the guests. "However, there are pieces here, save for this one, that are for sale."

"The rest are and I do commission pieces, as well," Will said, ducking his head into Hannibal's shoulder at the curve of his neck.

"We fully expect these pieces to be sold before the night's end, hm?" Hannibal said, smooth and charming to the guests who were all gathering now around the various pieces.

Hannibal rubbed Will's back and nuzzled him, walking him away from the crowd for a few moments. "You are a sensation, Will. Everyone is speechless, myself included."

"It's not too risque is it?" Will whispered, wondering if the piece was too much to show to strangers like this.

"Certainly not, it is exquisite, Mylimasis," Hannibal whispered back, a twinkle of love and admiration in his eyes and in his tone. "I would remind you of the sculptures from centuries past that are were done in a similar manner."

"I haven't seen them, Hannibal," Will teased, though he had heard of them, touched a few that were replicas, but not the real ones. "It's what I was trying to convey. You told me that's what I reminded you of, and I was determined to see myself through you, somehow."

Hannibal smiled at that, and leaned in to kiss Will, passionately, holding him firmly around his waist. "And so you did," he hummed, deeply and pressed their profiles together. "I love you, William. Thank you. It is a gift I shall cherish always."

“I hope so,” Will murmured, the dogs all winding through their legs, sniffing at every as Abigail had let them out so she wasn’t around for the unveiling.

"I will," Hannibal promised, deft doctor's fingers trailing over the fine fabric of Will's suit coat. "Shall we give Abigail her gift since she has returned?"

“If you’d like to,” Will said, wanting the gift to be more of Hannibal’s than anything else, as Will often doted on his adopted daughter behind the scenes, away from everyone else.

"I would," Hannibal confirmed, and turned to walk towards the house. He gestured for Abigail to join them as they passed and entered into the privacy of sitting room.

Abigail followed and Will was lead, mostly sitting in on the event. He was sure Abigail would like the gift.

Hannibal walked over to retrieved the elegantly wrapped package and smiled, handing the stag themed gift to Abigail. "I do hope you'll find this useful."

Abigail opened it slowly, a smiling brightening her face slowly as she revealed the forest green, leather journal and beautiful fountain pen. “It’s beautiful. Thank you so much, Hannibal. I love journals.”

"Ah, excellent. You're welcome, Abigail," Hannibal smiled, feeling triumphant with himself that the lovely girl approved of the gift. He touched her arm once and then sat down on the lounge, taking a break before he'd have to go back out and entertain the guests. "I am pleased you like it. It should age well."

“Yes, I’ll cherish it,” Abigail said, getting up to lean over and hug Hannibal, and then Will.

“Hannibal’s idea,” Will reiterated.

“You told him my favorite color though,” Abigail pointed out.

"He did," Hannibal chuckled, smiling at the both of them as he crossed one leg over the other. "After I'd held him hostage on our shopping expedition. He was none too pleased but fortunately seemed to enjoy assisting me with the selection of your gift."

“Dad hates clothes shopping,” Abigail chuckled. “Buying for someone else? Easy.”

"Indeed he does," the Doctor nodded, casting a knowing and yet amused look at the girl. "It was a wonder I was able to convince him to go at all. I did promise a fishing trip."

Abigail laughed. “Ohh, well you’re in for it now.” She took her head and patted Hannibal’s shoulder on her way out to give them a moment.

"I'm sure you'll enjoy telling her of our outing, hm, William?" Hannibal grinned, his lips twisting beautifully as he let his hand brace his cheekbone and chin.

“Maybe,” Will said, touching Hannibal’s thigh, facing him the best he could. “Thank you for this. I hope your friends commission something at least.”

"You're welcome," Hannibal smiled, and let his hand rest atop Will's. "I am certain Doctor Chilton will definetly, if for no other reason than to observe you."

“No doubt he’ll talk too much,” Will chuckled, hoping they weren’t overheard. “He seems the type to want his bust in front of his office.”

"You're correct, he is a rather chatty one, isn't he?" Hannibal laughed, rubbing Will's thigh. "I think he would, perhaps next to his bust of Sigmund Freud."

“I’m sure they would go well together,” Will said, chuckling.

"Yes," Hannibal smiled, and then looked over his shoulder out the back window. "Shall we return to our guests then? See if anyone is interested in purchasing one of your pieces, Mylimasis?"

Will stood slowly, hand out for Hannibal. “Let’s do that.”

Hand on his waist, Hannibal stood and smoothed out his tux, taking the offered one from Will. He laced their fingers together and walked back out into the backyard. "This will all be over soon enough," he whispered, ready to relax with a snifter of brandy by the wire with his beloved.

"There you are," Beverly said with a smile, walking over. "How much for the sculpture of the dog, since the one I wanted first isn’t for sale?"

“Five hundred?” Will asked, knowing the sculpture was smaller than some, but still one he liked, it was of the likeness of Buster.

Beverly contemplated, making a humming sound as she did and then gripped Will's arm in a friendly show of enthusiasm. "You drive a hard bargain, Graham. I'll take it."

“Really?” Will was surprised, to say the least, leaning toward her. “I can do payments if you need.”

"That's ok, I have some money stowed away. I'll write you a check," Beverly said, and rubbed Will's arm before moving her hand. "Take care of Doctor Lecter though, will you? He needs someone to get him to loosen up."

Will laughed at that. “Appreciated, and I will. He’s going fishing with me this weekend.”

"Now *that's* something I'd pay to witness," Beverly laughed, looking over at Hannibal who was pressing his lips together in mock disdain. “But good, good job.”

“I’ll attempt to get some video, but we’ll see how that goes, my videography skill are lacking,” Will teased.

"I'll come set up a tripod," Beverly offered playfully, quirking a brow at Hannibal, who shook his head. "Then my associates and I can all watch it with popcorn in my office."

“You all know Hannibal?” Will asked, brows raised with some surprise.

"He's helped us before," Beverly asked, feeling out the situation. "Jack Crawford brought him in to consult. He hasn't told you?" She turned to look at the doctor. "You keeping things from your boyfriend?"

"I've informed Will that I've assisted once, however, we did not discuss it at length," Hannibal explained.

"Uh-huh, well this looks like *my* que to go get more champagne," Beverly said. "Will, thanks again and I'll leave the check on my way out."

“Thanks,” Will said and when he was sure she was gone, he turned to where he knew Hannibal was beside him. “You have them fooled.”

Hannibal smiled, which was in his tone and nodded once, taking Will's arm. He loved the confirmation, and how letting Miss Katz think he'd been hesitant to reveal his association with the FBI in order to protect their privacy worked in his favor. "Yes, that I do."

“I hope they continue to be blind, so to speak,” Will whispered with a grin, leaning into Hannibal.

"As do I," Hannibal grinned back, turned his head to catch Will's lips for a kiss. He lead them around the yard, strolling slowly, some of the guests walking up and saying their goodbyes. Chilton made his way up when he saw the opportunity.

"I must be off, but thank you both for the lovely suree," Frederick smiled, handing his empty champagne flute off dismissively to one of the staff members who passed. "Mister Graham, when would be a convenient time to come by your studio? I would like a bust done for my office."

“I’ll be in on Monday, all day, anytime,” Will replied. “We can discuss it then or if you’d like we can make plans to start it then. In which case, wear comfortable clothes, Doctor.”

"Yes, well, I'll be sure to dress for the occasion," Chilton said, decidedly, pulling out his pocket watch to look at the time. "I'll see you on Monday, Mister Graham. Thank you again gentlemen."

“Bye,” Will said with a look at Hannibal. “That ought to be interesting.”

"Yes, I do not envy you in that regard," Hannibal agreed, watching as the last guest was being ushered out., the staff beginning to clean up. He sighed, though not with discontent. "I believe you mentioned wanting to speak with me about your modeling?"

“Mainly teasing,” was Will’s reply as he slipped his arms around Hannibal.

Hannibal nodded, and placed his hands on Will's waist, under his coat, tracing the line of his torso. "Mainly, hm?" he said quietly, and pulled his beau closer. "I do enjoy it when you tease me."

“Do you?” Will leaned in and kissed Hannibal, ignoring the clean up crew that worked around them.

"Yes," Hannibal murmured and kissed Will again, not at all phased by those that might be watching either. He gently nipped on the plush lower lip his breath was ghosting over and tightened his grip on his lover's waist as he leaned over to his ear. "I am going take you, and quite hard, the next time we are in my bed."

Will sucked his lip into his mouth at the thought, nuzzling his head against Hannibal's lips as his voice rocked through him, skin splaying with goosebumps. "Later tonight then."

"Later, yes. I look forward to it," Hannibal rasped, inhaling the rich and poignant scent of Will's hair as he held him. "Let's go inside and leave the staff to their duty. Miss Katz left your check on the table inside."

Will nodded and moved away from Hannibal, but took his hand, knowing the floor plan of the house well enough now to move about it without worry. "It was nice of her."

"It was. She seems to have taken a liking to you," Hannibal smiled, walking inside the house with Will. He picked up the check, and handed it over. "I also heard other guests whispering about your work, along with their ideas for pieces to be commissioned."

"I hope they do. Little too late for me to change careers now," Will smirked, putting the check into his pocket for now. "I'll have Abigail help me upload this to the bank later."

"It is never too late to do anything," Hannibal said, taking off his coat and then hanging it up for now. "Nonetheless, I would hate to see you stop your work. Such a talent should not lie dormant."

"They don't call them starving artists for nothing," Will replied, leaning up against the counter.

"You will never starve with me at your side," Hannibal offered, looking at Will thoroughly, enjoying seeing him in that suit still. "Though your work spoke for itself this evening and it should be of no issue."

"We'll see," Will said, mulling that over. "I need a drink."

"Whiskey?" Hannibal offered, walking around to the bar to pull down two glasses.

"Please," Will said, turning to follow Hannibal's foot steps and voice. "That was a lot of people."

"It was," Hannibal smiled, and poured Will two fingers, along with some Brandy for himself. "But well worth the sacrifice I'd say."

"Yes, that's true," Will agreed, downing his drink in one swallow. "That's better."

"Another?" Hannibal asked, placing his hand atop Will's as he leaned on the counter and slowly sipped his own.

"No, that's okay. No need to be drunk…" Will murmured, turning his hand to clasp Hannibal's.

The staff was efficient, cleaning quickly, Hannibal observed, which made him happy. He drank the rest of his Brandy and sat it down, leading he and Will over to sitting room once more. "I wonder if you would model for me sometime, privately, while I sketch you..."

“You know I would,” Will replied, and sat down with Hannibal, sitting close to him, his hand on his beau’s thigh.

Hannibal turned towards Will and took his jaw in his hand, and leaned in to softly brush his lips over his beloved's, inhaling the delightful scent of him. "Yes, just as I would do anything for you. I love you, endlessly."

“I love you, too,” Will whispered back, touching Hannibal’s chest as their lips barely brushed.

"Mm, William. So decadent," Hannibal murmured, still very moved by the gift he'd received and taken with his beau. He pressed forward, the staff having just left and kissed Will slowly, back against the couch, tasting the residual whiskey on his lover's tongue.

“I take it you loved the sculpture then?” Will groaned, laying back on the couch, head to the armrest as he kicked off his posh shoes

"Yes, very much," Hannibal answered, toeing off his shoes as well as he positioned himself between Will's legs and ran his tongue from above the collar of his shirt up to his ear, where he nibbled. "Though as beautiful as it is, I will always prefer the original."

“Is the likeness correct?” Will managed, shifting his hips toward Hannibal, already growing hard under his pressed trousers.

"It is a perfect replica," Hannibal rasped, quickly undoing Will's shirt buttons, desperate to feel his skin and muscle. He didn't bother with anything else yet and rolled his hips as he bit kisses down his lover's neck once more, to his chest. Laving over the sculptor's nipple, he murmured, breath hot, "Every succulent detail, you captured precisely, Will."

“Took a lot of self exploration,” Will replied with a sly grin, biting his bottom lip as lust blossomed through him, flushing his pale skin.

"Tell me, how did you touch yourself, Will? Were you able to stay professional at all times, hm?" Hannibal rumbled, licking down his beau's abdomen, to the waist of his trousers. He undid them, and tugged the expensive pants and boxers off, placing them over the couch. The doctor undid his own shirt and bow tie then, shucking it off before taking his lover's plump balls into his warm, wet mouth as he hummed.

“Always up until the moment I thought about you,” Will groaned, shrugging his jacket and shirt off and put them over the side of the sofa.

The thought of Will touching himself, thinking about him, made Hannibal's cock throb, and he responded by removing the rest of his own clothing quickly. The elegant man, quite lewdly, took his lover's dick into mouth, opening his throat and not stopping the descent until

his nose bumped the dark thicket of coarse hair at the base. He hollowed his cheeks and began swirling his tongue around the shaft, expertly, with a pleased hum.

“I’ve been working on it since before we got together officially,” Will mused, hands going to Hannibal’s hair, tugging on the silky strands. “Even apart, I thought about you…”

Hannibal popped off, and leaned over, grabbing a vial of lubricant from the table drawer, slathering his cock with it. He kissed up to Will's lips once more, a clear bead of pre come spilling from the tip as he rutted between his beloved's cheeks. "I thought of you as well, often, as I pleasured myself."

Will spread his firm thighs, running his hands up Hannibal’s hairy chest. “How?”

"As I took myself into my hands, I thought of how exquisite you looked the first night on my couch," Hannibal groaned, as he pushed inside Will, nipping at his lips. "Saw your lips parting in ecstasy in my memory palace as well as how it would feel when we finally joined and became one..."

Will moaned this time, hands rolling up to grip Hannibal’s shoulders. “I remembered how you spoke, how you *felt*…”

"As did I," Hannibal grunted, his dark eyes fixed on Will's face as he pressed his legs up and swivelled his hips to plunge in deeper. "You felt phenomenal, just as you do now...."

“God, you’re so thick,” Will managed, lifting his hips to meet Hannibal’s with each thrust, swallowing hard.

"Ah, William," Hannibal breathed, sweat forming on his shoulders and brow as he picked up the pace. "You are so warm and you constrict my cock as though your flesh was made just for it...for me, and I you."

Will chuckled at that and tugged Hannibal down to kiss him, long and sloppy, their hips bumping and grinding, heat pooling at the base of his spine. “Shut up and fuck me.”

Hannibal chuckled in turn, and then dove back into Will's mouth, taking his wrists and pinning them behind his head as he began pounding harder, furry balls slapping wetly. Will’s fingers spread as pleasure started to build and coil, pushing him toward the edge.

“Hannibal-”

Fire burned in Hannibal's veins, spreading down his spine and into his groin as he pistoned into Will's ass with wild abandon. He bit the other man's lower lip, sucking it through his teeth as he neared the brink of his release.

"Will-"

“I’m-” Will started, slipping right over, writhing under Hannibal as he reached for his own cock and pumped it hard three times, coming against his own palm.

Hannibal was right behind him, watching Will come undone like that. He pumped a half dozen more times and then came with a roar, kissing his lover's name into his mouth like a prayer.

“You are perfect,” Will whispered as they came down from their sex induced high, kissing him over and over again.

"As are you, Mylimasis," Hannibal murmured, love struck as he laved their tongues together. "I want to wake up to you, every morning, and go to bed at your side each night. Say you'll live with me..."

Will hummed, pleased, and loose limbed, and completely love struck. “Live here?”

“Yes, you and your pack,” Hannibal said, kissing under Will’s jaw as he carded through his beau’s hair. “I am very serious in my feelings for you. I wish us to have a life together. The first step towards that would be shared living space, if you are open to such.”

“What of my home?” Will asked, slightly nervous over giving up his space, his quiet, his peace.

“Keep your place, if you’d like,” Hannibal suggested, stroking Will’s cheek. “Or we could both sell our homes, and get something new together, perhaps a compromise?”

“That’s… very committed,” Will replied with a swallow. “Where will I fish?”

Hannibal moved off of Will then, and rolled over on his with his back the cushion of the couch as he faced Will and furrowed his brow. "There are plenty of homes near bodies of water," he offered. "If you are not ready, William, simply forget I inquired and we will continue as we have thus far. I can wait for you, if need be, just as I did before."

“I’ve upset you,” Will stated, empathy in overdrive since he was so open with Hannibal. Will was not sure how the dogs would take moving, how he, himself, might take it. New places were hard to get accustomed to living in for him, always months of adjustment. “It’s… much harder for me to pack up and relocate. I… have to be sure things are exact, Hannibal. I like it here, but it’s not much space for all the dogs.”

"A bit disappointed, perhaps, but not angry or upset," Hannibal assured, watching Will. He leaned over to kiss his beau's cheek, wrapping his arm around his smooth, muscular chest. "I do understand that it would be quite the adjustment in many a regard. As such, we can take our time, Mylimasis, and perhaps revisit the notion later." The doctor nuzzled under the other's jaw. "We have all the time in the world."

“We do,” Will said, moving to stand, holding his hand out toward where he was sure Hannibal was. “Let’s shower and get to bed.”

"An excellent idea," Hannibal responded and stood, taking Will's hand. He walked with his beloved to the bathroom, starting the shower.

It was difficult for Will to know Hannibal was upset, but he let it go for now as they both got in. “I’ll consider it.”

Hannibal understood, he knew that given Will's blindness and social anxiety, it would be a big adjustment. "That is all I ask," he said, a smile in his tone as he washed away the day from his tawny skin. "Know that should you decide not to, I will love you no less."

“And I suppose it’s too much to ask you to move in with me?” Will asked, taking the soap from Hannibal once he was done with it and washing himself.

"Why do you presume that it might be?" Hannibal asked, soaping up his hair next. "I'll take it into consideration. I have a lot of things. However, as I have not been upstairs in your home, I have no idea the space you may or may not have."

“Dumb idea then,” Will murmured, leaving his hair unwashed.

"William," Hannibal began, his tone unamused as he rinsed his hair and placed the shampoo bottle into Will's hand. "I did not say no to my recollection. I merely asked for the same courtesy you requested of me and that was the opportunity to contemplate."

“The house is small, I know that. I like it small, it’s easier for me,” Will said, honestly, and put a little shampoo into his palm and lathered it through this hair.

"Yes, that is entirely understandable," Hannibal agreed, taking a breath as he watched Will lather his beautiful hair. He mulled over the options, and pursed his lips.

“Your house is so big. I know I haven’t felt it all yet, or been in every room…” Will leaned forward to rinse his hair in the water.

"Well then perhaps a tour is in order. I could take you to Mischa's room, as well as the others," Hannibal offered, placing his hands on Will's hips, nearing him. "And speaking of my sister. She will be coming for a visit next week. Since we did not go to the symphony tonight, perhaps we could all go together. I would very much like for you to meet her."

“Oh,” Will said, nodding. “If you want to do that, sure.” He had no real plans anyway, and seeing as he was living with Hannibal for the time being…

"Excellent. Thank you," Hannibal smiled, and leaned in to kiss Will's wet lips, holding him close against his chest now. "She is eager to meet you and likewise I am as well. She is the only family I have, blood wise."

“Only fair we meet, just as you’ve met Abigail,” Will agreed, leaning in to kiss Hannibal again. “I’m sure she is great.”

"She is entirely frustrating at moments," Hannibal chuckled, over Will's lips, clutching around his waist. "But a very independent and cunning young woman."

“She’ll have us on our toes then,” Will chuckled. “I’m sure she isn’t so bad.”

"She will," Hannibal smiled, tucking a wet strand of hair behind Will's perfectly shaped ear. "She is wonderful, yes, but as with most siblings, she enjoys goading me whenever she can."

“I can’t wait to meet her now,” Will grinned, and then reached to turn the water off.

Hannibal hummed something that was more like a playful growl and then reached over to grab two towels. He handed one to Will first and then started drying himself off. With a grin in return, he canted his head towards his boyfriend to joke a bit more with him. "Yes, you two can plot my demise together. Hours of fun, undoubtedly."

“She’ll have more fun watching than I would,” Will teased, drying himself off, hair first, then the rest, before stepping out, carefully.

After Will was out, Hannibal followed suit, wrapping the soft towel around his hips. "You can enjoy it in other ways, perhaps," he said, playfully, with narrowed eyes. "You have the ability to undo me as it is, William. Total power to render me at your mercy."

“How terrible for you,” Will said, leaving the towel in the hamper his foot hit, to be sure it was there, and walked out stark naked toward their bedroom.

Hannibal let his eyes trail down Will's back, to his ass as it flexed when he walked out. He smirked, and took his towel off as well, following him out. "Cunning boy, Will," he said, catching up to him, and wrapping his arms around his waist from behind. "You are trying to make me take you again, are you not?"

“I might be,” Will groaned, thrown off with his idea of where he was in Hannibal’s house, but he knew it’d be worth it. “You’re distracting.”

"Insatiable," Hannibal growled, scraping his teeth over the back of Will's neck. He rolled his hips into his beau's plush ass, letting his hardening cock rest between the muscular cheeks there. "And you walking around nude is a welcome distraction for me..."

“How did you ever get through art class?” Will teased, head lolled back on his neck, rested onto Hannibal’s shoulder.

“It is a wonder I ever managed to sketch anything at all,” Hannibal rumbled, walking Will over to the stairs slowly, not ceasing the nips and licks on his skin. He stopped just at the foot of them and guided his beloved to bend over. The doctor got down on and spread his beau’s cheeks, gliding his tongue up the cleft. “Such beauty should be savored, often and thoroughly.”

Will groaned, hands on the upper stairs to hold himself up, gasping as his head dropped between his arms. “Hannibal-”

Hannibal reached around and took Will’s cock into his hand, beginning to stroke slowly, thumbing over the tip as he continued feasting on his lover’s ass. He plunged his tongue in, as far as it could go, working open the taut muscle. “Mm, William…”

“Oh, Hannibal, Please-” Will said, all but begging, unaware of how he ever lived without this, how he ever decided that not being with Hannibal was a good idea. Heat bloomed in his core, daring to burst right into Hannibal’s hand.

Feeling the thickening of Will's shaft, Hannibal ate him more aggressively. The doctor licked over his hole, spearing in again, over and over as he twisted his wrist deftly with a deep throaty growl. There was nothing better than hearing his lover come apart under his ministrations.

“Are you-?” Will shook with need, hips bucking into Hannibal’s fist, desperately.

Hannibal slathered more saliva over Will's hole, and then stood, putting a generous amount on his cock as well before pushing in, slowly, as to not hurt his beau. "Yes," he breathed, and started to move once he felt the worked open muscle give further. There was still a bit of his come there from the couch earlier, so before too long he was moving in earnest, gripping the man's hip with one hand and fisting his cock with the other. "Ah, Will-"

The brunet groaned louder, unable to stop the way he felt everything start to bubble up quickly inside him, burning hot. “You drive me crazy with lust, you know that?”

Pleasure licked down Hannibal spine, into his core as he set a rapid pace. Being inside Will was a sinfully sweet indulgence, a gift and one he would always treasure. Swiveling his hips, he bent his knees to tap right against his beloved's prostate with relentless abandon. "That is precisely the effect you have on me," he answered, his words punctuated with raspy groans. "Mm, so much you make me feel-"

Hannibal’s fresh scent was almost as good as when he wore cologne, only this was just him, all feral hormones and want. Will pressed back with Hannibal’s shifting hips, taking in him in with every thrust. “Harder, do it harder…”

Hannibal snaked his arm around Will's waist, gripping tight as he began jack-hammering into his ass. He was nearly dizzy from the feel of his beloved's warmth enveloping his thick, throbbing cock. He wanted to suspend moments like these, stop time so that they could be stuck in their pleasure for all eternity. "Will, Ah, Will-"

Spiraling, Will came hard into Hannibal’s hand, dripping and spurting over his fingers as his loins throbbed uncontrollably, almost growling with the feel of it. He’d never felt anything quite so amazing as Hannibal.

The squeeze on his cock sent Hannibal cascading down the well of his desire. He pistoned half a dozen more times and felt his shaft thicken, pleasure burning down and out the tip, coating Will's walls. The doctor bit down on his beau's shoulder, breaking skin as he ground into him, riding out the waves with a growl of his own.

Will groaned, chest heaving at the pain. “Hannibal…” he managed, his body now exhausted and loose, ready for a good sleep.

Hannibal pulled out, come following his cock and licked over the wound he'd made, though it hadn't been overly deep. He angled Will's face to kiss him slowly. "Mm, we will both sleep

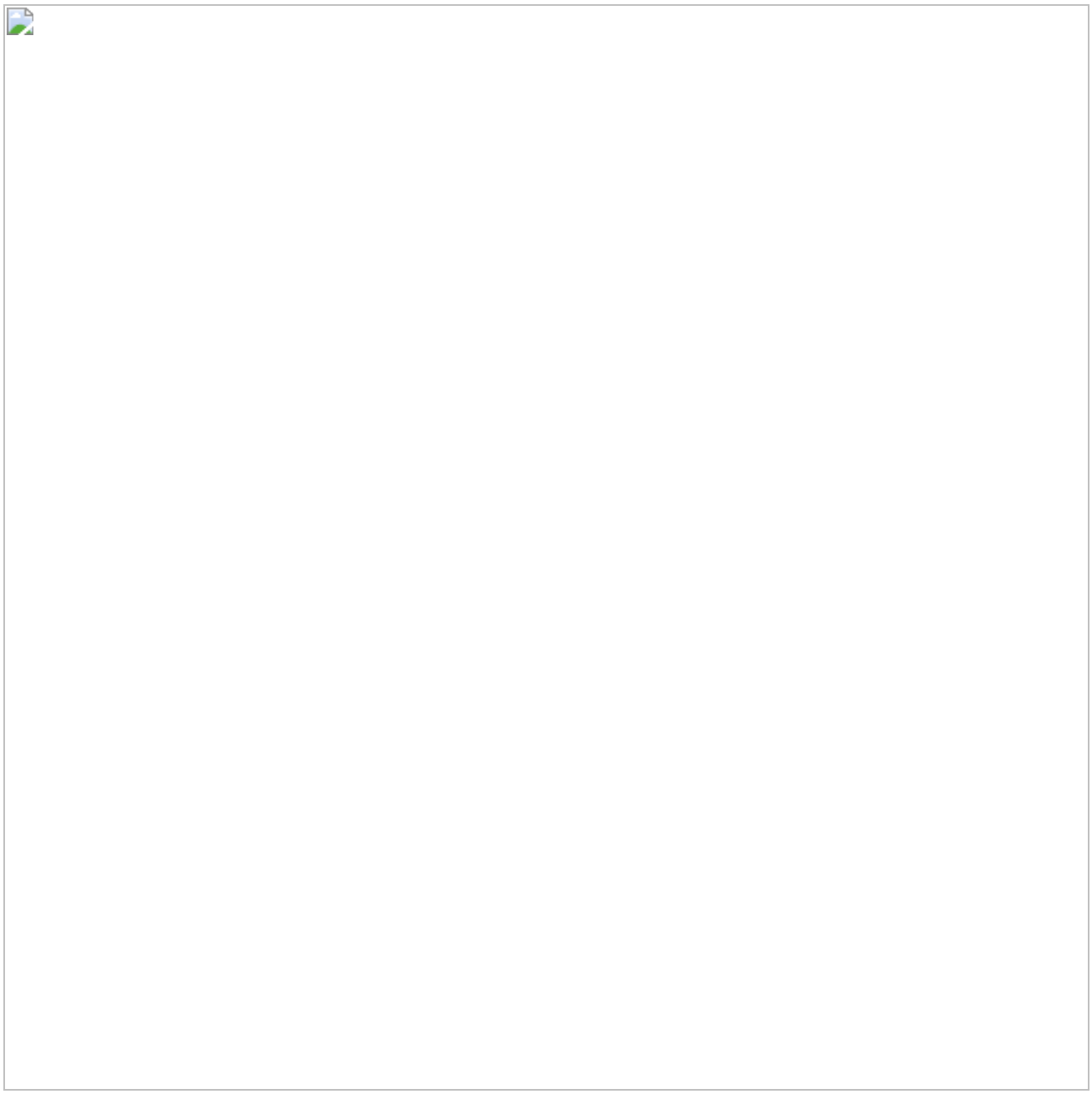
soundly tonight, I'd wager."

“Yeah,” Will whispered, fucked senseless. “Let’s get to bed.”

"Let's," Hannibal agreed and took Will's hand to lead him upstairs. He was quite spent as well and ready to just hold his beau until they drifted off.

Chapter 9

Chapter by 11Mydesign11, AchillesLament (11Mydesign11), Destinyawakened, Identically_Different



A few days went by and Hannibal enjoyed every minute with Will, but today was going to be interesting to say the least. He was eager for his sister to meet the man he was madly in love with and likewise happy to get to see her. With lunch prepared and on the table, and the Doctor called out to his beau. "Will, lunch is prepared," he said, washing and drying his hands before he joined him on the deck while the dogs played. "Mischa will be arriving in the next few minutes, she sent a text and is very close."

Will had earphones in, listening to a book on his phone, and tilted his head toward Hannibal when he heard him over it. He touched the volume button on the side and turned it off. “I’ll be right there.”

"Excellent," Hannibal smiled and then walked back into the house, into the kitchen where he retrieved the bottle of wine on the counter that had been breathing. He brought it over with two glasses and then poured them each a glass that they could enjoy while waiting on Mischa.

Will set his phone and earphone aside as he walked in, leaving them on the counter where he knew to find them later, later his hands skim the marbled tops as he scooted around the counter to Hannibal. “What’s for lunch?

"Prosciutto stuffed chicken in Marsala wine sauce," Hannibal answered, and then handed Will a glass of an especially old vintage. It would compliment the meal perfectly. He leaned in to kiss his beau's lips. "It is a favorite of Mischa's."

“Then it must be good,” Will said with a little smile against Hannibal’s shapely, perfect lips.

"Yes," Hannibal smiled back, and kissed Will again, backing him against the counter. He minded the wine and was about to plunge his tongue in again when the doorbell sounded. "Ah, Mischa is here," he murmured and then moved off. "Shall we?"

“After that?” Will groaned a little, adjusting himself before he took Hannibal’s hand, having reached out to grasp it before he wandered off.

"Apologies, she has arrived a few minutes earlier than anticipated," Hannibal chuckled, setting his wine glass down on the table as they passed. He squeezed Will's hand and opened the door, a wide smile spreading on his face. "Dear Mischa, you've arrived. Please, come in."

"Thanks," Mischa smiled, walking in with her Louis Vuitton bag slung over her shoulder. She wrapped her arms around Hannibal's neck and hugged him once the door was closed. "This must be Will."

"Yes, this is my William," Hannibal smiled, taking Mischa's bag for her. "Will, this is my sister."

"Nice to meet you, Will. You're as handsome as Hanni described," she grinned, placing her hand in his.

“Lovely to meet you, you… sound as lovely as Hannibal describes,” Will said back, teasing a little as he shook her hand.

"Thanks," Mischa giggled, ignoring the cringe from her brother at the nickname. She knew he hated being called 'Hanni'. "My brother does love to go on."

"Mischa, let's go eat, I've prepared one of your favorites," Hannibal said, placing her bag on the sofa for now and then taking Will's hand again.

"Smells like....Chicken Marsala?"

"Yes. Now come, please," Hannibal insisted, walking with Will to their lunch. He sat down, after pulling out both of their chairs, at the head of the table.

Mischa sat down, looking over everything and took her glass of wine in hand, sipping after a good sniff. "So Will, are you keeping Hannibal on his toes?"

Will folded his hands in his lap, listening to the both of them breathe, getting used to it before picking up his fork to eat. “I try to. I think I’m more of a frustration for him sometimes than anything else.”

"Nonsense," Hannibal spoke up, before Mischa could respond. He took a bite, chewed and then swallowed, enjoying his creation. "Will is nothing but a delight to me."

"Oh, Hannibal, such a romantic," Mischa grinned, and then slid the chicken from her fork into her mouth with a hum to show her approval. "Will, are you looking forward to the symphony this evening?"

“I love the symphony,” Will commented, taking a few bites and then washed it down with a sip or two of wine. “Haven’t been in a while. A little out of budget.”

"I do too. I just have been so busy I've not had the chance to enjoy one in quite a while," Mischa mused, then took a bite and wiped her mouth. Winston came padding over then, and flopped on the floor, big eyes shifting up at the table. "What an adorable dog. I'm surprised my brother even let a dog in the house. He never let me have one when we were younger."

“I have seven, they are all here, just in back,” Will commented. “They’re sort of part of my package.”

"I love dogs," Mischa commented, grinning as she looked over at Hannibal for a moment who was sipping his wine and listening. "Hannibal must be in love for him to bend his rigid rules for you. Especially for not one but seven."

“He wants me to move in permanently,” Will mused, smiling as he took another bite, able to feel the tease of tension between Hannibal and Mischa. “Or maybe he's just fond of them all.”

"They are well behaved," Hannibal added, grinning as he looked at Will with nothing but adoration in his eyes. "Or it could be that I am merely fond of you."

Mischa rolled her eyes at her brother and cleared her throat. "So are you going to?"

“The backyard isn’t really large enough to keep all the dogs, I couldn’t part with them, so we’re considering things,” Will answered, unable to see any of the looks between them or gestured toward himself.

"It's a big step," Mischa agreed, after swallowing more wine and taking another dainty bite. "Hannibal's never wanted to live with anyone before, at least not that I've ever heard about."

"No," Hannibal confirmed, briefly placing his hand over Will's. "Only William."

“That’s why considering it carefully is best. I haven’t lived with anyone else for years, I want it to be right,” Will said, turning his hand to take Hannibal’s.

"Smart," Mischa agreed, happy to see her brother so in love, even if she enjoyed teasing Hannibal about it. "So you two met in art class? Do you still model?"

“I plan to, we’ve just been busy,” Will answered, thought he had not talked it over with Hannibal, he figured it’d be fine. Afterall, it was how they met and Will needed the money despite the few pieces he’d sold and got commissioned to work on.

Mischa finished her meal, not having eaten all of it to maintain her figure and held her glass out for Hannibal to refill, which he did and then also his own, as well as Will's. She smiled and took a sip. "I see. Well, I can certainly see where you'd be good at modeling. I had an offer to model once, but turned it down--or rather, Hannibal insisted I turn it down."

"Yes, I did indeed, though it was your decision, ultimately," Hannibal reminded, pinching the stem of his wine glass between forefinger and thumb. "Forgive me, if I did not want my little sister gawked at in such a way."

Mischa rolled her eyes again, shaking her head, and then turned to Will. "Anyways, as I was going to say, you have to do what you have to, right?"

Will set his fork down, suddenly feeling a bit uneasy with the conversation. He did the modeling for money, but he also liked that he got to help art students and enthusiasts alike learn and grow, despite having wanting to leave once because Hannibal brought a ‘date’. “I am… surprised then it hasn’t been brought up.” Will stood, leaving the rest of his food and wine untouched. “I need some air.” He touched the table, fingers skimming it until he was in the next room, and then out the backdoor to check on the dogs, Winston at his side.

"Hannibal...I-I'm sorry, I didn't mean-"

"You've said enough, Mischa. Excuse me a moment," Hannibal said, annoyed as he placed his napkin on the table as he rose from his seat.

The doctor walked out to where Will was and sighed. "The thoughts I had about my sister doing what you do are that of a protective brother, nothing more. I harbor no judgements towards you, and take no issue with your continuation of your profession. I apologize she brought it up, it was not how I hoped to discuss things with you."

Will’s hands were in his pockets, pulling his khaki’s tight across his backside as he listened to Hannibal, his unseeing gaze straight ahead. “Because your sister hardly need the money. Maybe she wanted to do clothing modeling? Fashion? For fun?”

"Will, as you know, I have been her charge since we were young, after our parents were killed. She is as much a daughter to me as a sister. I simply wanted her to do something else with her life," Hannibal offered, looking at his beau's rear briefly before walking around him to step in front. "We are often protective of our family, just as I'm sure you are of Abigail. Should Mischa wish to pursue professional modeling, I could not stop her, nor would I scold her, however I will always push those I love to be their very best."

“No, you talked her out of something you thought to be damaging to her career at some point,” Will pointed out, lifting his chin when he sensed Hannibal in front of him. “I want honesty from you. Is it going to bother you if I continue?”

"Very well, yes, I suppose I did. I cannot be blamed for being concerned for her career," Hannibal said, though not unkindly. He placed his hand on Will's cheek, fingers stretching under his ear as he thumbed over his skin. "I do not relish the idea of others partaking of your beauty, Will, no. That said, I would not strip it from you and it is not out of judgement that it would bother me."

“Your sister talked as though it was below standards for you for me to continue. Like pity,” Will whispered roughly, but didn’t pull away from Hannibal. “I don’t want pity. I don’t want to be taken care of, Hannibal. I can earn my own, it’s just harder for me.”

"You would believe the word of my sister, over my own?" Hannibal asked, taken aback. "When have I ever pitied you, Will? Give me one instance. I am well aware of your capabilities and have never wished to be with someone who was weak. You are strong, which I have expressed on numerous occasions."

“I was *asking*, not accusing,” Will reiterated, aware he might have come off as accusing when he hadn’t meant it. “She knows you better than I do, does she not?”

"She would say she knows a lot," Hannibal answered, calming a bit. "However, you know me in ways she will never. I do not wish to quarrel with you William. While I do want what is best for you, I also wish for your happiness."

“I’m happy with you, with our lives together. I know you’d like more. I’d like those sort of wants out on the table,” Will said, not wanting to argue either, “but that can wait until we’re alone. I’m sorry I was rude.”

"I am very elated with you, Mylimasis, and our lives. However, I have expressed my desires to you," Hannibal said, watching Will, he leaned in to kiss his lips once and then placed his hands into his pockets. "It is alright, she placed herself in the middle of something she should not have. We will finish discussing this later, then, yes."

“Okay, back to lunch then,” Will said, reaching his hand for Hannibal’s. “I’m sorry.”

"I forgive you, Will. I too, apologize for both my sister and for my lack of communication on the topic of your profession," Hannibal said, squeezing his beau's hand as they went back inside.

“We’ll talk about it later,” Will suggested once more and let Hannibal lead them in.

"Yes," Hannibal agreed again, and walked inside with Will, where Mischa sat drinking wine at the table.

"I'm sorry. I overstepped," she said, twirling the stem of her wine glass, having watched some of the interaction of the two men through the window from where she sat.

“It’s fine,” Will said, taking his seat once more to try and stomach down his lunch.

Mischa, long done with her food, looked at her watch, and then to Hannibal remorsefully. She wasn't sure that Will was really okay, and not having known him long meant she was thinking the two men might need some time alone. Either way she was fine. "You know, Hanni, I think I may go out shopping or something, come back later."

"Mischa, please, you needn't do that. You've only just arrived," Hannibal said, worried for his sister now. This wasn't going at all as he'd hoped.

"It's okay, honestly," Mischa assured, preparing to stand from the table. "Will, again, good to meet you."

“Don’t leave on my behalf,” Will said, sighing heavily. “Hannibal has been looking forward to seeing you all week.”

“I’ll stay,” Mischa said, not wanting to make more issues. “Lunch was very good, Hannibal, thank you.”

“Thank you, Mischa,” Hannibal smiled and then turned to Will. “Would you like me to warm your lunch, Will? It has undoubtedly grown cold.”

“It’s fine, it would be too much trouble to heat the oven,” Will said, not minding at all. He set about taking a few bites, letting the brother and sister talk.

Hannibal nodded and then began making small talk with Mischa, mostly inquiring about what she had been up to and the like.

Once Will was done eating, she looked at the time. "I need to shower and get ready for tonight, so if you'll excuse me guys, I'll be back down once I've finished."

"Of course, certainly, take your time as we have a two hours yet."

"Okay," she nodded, flipping her hair off her shoulder and then stood, walking out and up the stairs to her usual guest room after she'd grabbed her bag.

"I'll wash the dishes, Mylimasis," Hannibal offered, placing his hand over his beau's.

“You’ve cooked, it’s the least I can do,” Will offered, taking up his plate to take to the counter.

"Very well, thank you," Hannibal agreed, helping to clear the table. Once he sat his plate down next to Will's, he pulled him against his body, gently and kissed him passionately. "I love you, Will, and will continue to do so, for all eternity."

Will melted against Hannibal, arms around his shoulders as they kissed, breathing together. “Are you promising your life with me?”

"Yes," Hannibal whispered, pressing their profiles together. "I want you to be with me until the very end, Will. I want to marry you, have a life, together and anywhere you want. Your

home, mine, somewhere new. I no longer care, as long as it is at your side." He felt his heart beating faster at the confession, but he was rendered weak by the man in his arms. "If that is too blunt a proposal or too sudden, I will wait until you are ready but I needed you to be aware of the immensity of my feelings for you."

Will knew, he could feel them daily, just waking up near Hannibal. Will flushed and started to laugh, shaking his head with disbelief, curls in his unseeing blue eyes. He fished around his khaki pants pocket for a moment and pulled out a little velvet box and handed it to Hannibal. “I was going to propose tonight. At the Symphony.” Inside the box was a simple gold band, etched with leaf patterns, nothing fancy, as Will could not afford much else.

"I'm sorry I hastened the proposal but am also moved beyond words," Hannibal said, his breath hitching in his throat as he looked at the ring and felt his eyes dampen with emotion. He had not expected such a commitment from him, and his heart was more full than it had ever been. "My answer is a resounding yes, Will. I could never entirely predict you." He took the ring out and handed it to his beau, after kissing him three times. "It is only right you place this beautiful ring on my finger."

“Give me your hand,” Will demanded, lovingly, and managed to wrangle the ring on Hannibal’s finger. “I guessed on size from girth of your fingers. I can be sized.” Will had been holding onto the ring for a few weeks, waiting and waiting… never sure until now. “We… we can buy a new house together. As long as you are patient with me.”

Hannibal looked at his hand and smiled brightly, kissing Will yet again, unable to not with how much emotion he felt. "It fits perfectly, William, thank you and of course I'll be patient. Anything you wish. I've already told you of my willingness to wait and take our time in that regard."

Will rested his hands in Hannibal's chest as they kissed once more, slower this time. He slipped his palms up Hannibal's shoulders, resting them on his neck, thumbs against his jaw. “You have perfectly situated yourself in my life since that day in class. You have not left my mind since.”

Large hands slid down to Will’s waist, as if to keep him there as Hannibal smiled. He gently squeezed, enjoying the feel of his beau’s trim cut middle and way the muscles shifted under his touch. “From the moment I saw you, heard you speak, I knew that I had to become a part of your life. I am simply pleased you allowed me the honor of doing so, Mylimasis. I am all the better for it.”

Will sighed, helplessly in love. “I'm glad you said yes. I was almost worried you might think it too soon.”

"No, and in truth, I had also been planning to propose. The ring is upstairs in my bureau," Hannibal chuckled, letting his fingers trail under Will's shirt to feel the warmth of his skin under his own. "I am delighted it was you who asked first, quelling my worries."

Will grinned and kissed Hannibal deeply, slowly for that. He'd never been so in love and I complacent and happy. “Do I still get to have it?” he asked, cheekily.

Hannibal kissed him back, groaning into the kiss before pulling back rubbing their noses together, a smile in his tone. He found he was also quite besotted, and hopelessly adrift, willingly downing in a sea of blissful love. "Mm, if you continue to kiss me like that and often, how could I refuse?"

Will flushed, resting their faces together, utterly thrilled. “Take me to it.”

"It would be a pleasure," Hannibal murmured, looking at the color in Will's cheeks, finding it all too appealing. He took his beau's hand and lead him upstairs, to the bedroom. Once inside, he pulled out a black box from the drawer and walked over to his fiance. "It is antique gold, something special done on the outside. A promise. I fitted you when you slept," he grinned, rubbing the velvet box over his lover's hand, then opened it to place the ring on his finger. He'd had ‘I love you always’ in braille done on the outside, in the form of small diamonds. Subtle to the eye but Will would feel it and always know. “I do hope you like it.”

Will felt the ring, and grinned, which spread like wildfire across his delicate, handsome features. He pulled Hannibal to him once more and kissed him, completely enthralled. “I feel like we conjoined, and somehow I can almost see the world through you.”

Hannibal cupped Will's face, love and awe twinkling in his eyes as he drew a picture of this moment in his mind. He would sketch it later, but for now, this would more than do. Breathless, he brushed his lips over his beloved's. "This is all I ever wanted for you, Will. For both of us. We are bound and tethered, now and always."

“I love you,” Will whispered, lips brushing, as he enjoyed every moment of their secret joining and promises.

"Aš tave myliu, William," Hannibal whispered back, his well muscled arms around Will's waist, doctor's hands resting against the dip of his back. To say that he was pleased would have been an understatement.

“Do we tell anyone or let it be a surprise later?” Will whispered, arms around Hannibal tightly, more than sure that this was his perfect destiny, this was what it all lead up to, despite their differences and insecurities. And Hannibal killing people.

"I would like to tell Mischa at least, and Abigail, if you would like. The rest of our friends can be surprised," Hannibal hummed, nuzzling into Will. "I will leave that up to you, hm?"

“If you haven’t noticed, I don’t have many friends,” Will pointed out. “Aside from Alana and Margot.”

Hannibal chuckled. "Yes, I meant Alana and her spouse," he agreed, and then thought through his list of friends. "I know many, but consider few actual friends. Perhaps a small intimate ceremony with Mischa and Abigail? We could invite Alana and her wife since it is because of her that we met."

“Good idea,” Will said with a smile and kissed Hannibal once more. “I’ll call Abigail and let her know. Did you want… to do it soon?”

"I would like to, yes," Hannibal answered, strumming through Will's hair as he took in that phenomenal smile. "It takes three days for the license, so we could be married next week, if that is not too soon."

“No, not too soon. Then we can get our affairs in order, get our houses up for sale…” Will offered, content this time when they talked about moving.

"Excellent," Hannibal smiled, delighted with the news. He wanted nothing more than to begin their lives together. "Mischa will be quite pleased, as I hope Abigail will as well."

“Abigail loves you, she’ll be thrilled, since she’s wanted me to find someone for a while now,” Will chuckled, giving Hannibal a placated smile.

"I'm pleased to hear it," Hannibal chuckled back and then kissed Will once more. "She will be my step-daughter, after all. As such, I would need her blessing."

“She just wants us to leave her alone, I think,” Will teased, fingers in Hannibal’s lapels, holding him closer and kissed him again.

"Then I would honor her wishes," Hannibal murmured, not interested in anything or anyone else in the moment but Will when he was kissing him like that. He slid his hands up his fiance's shirt, feeling the muscle of his back and sighed, euphoric and love struck.

“We could get married in your backyard, or wait and buy our new home together and marry there,” Will whispered, kissing Hannibal between words, over and over again.

"Our new home," Hannibal decided, whispering the words back and smacking sounds followed right afterwards. "I want to be able to look out into the yard and see our special day in my memory. Feel it lingering there."

“That sounds perfect.” Will knew it would take a lot of adjustment, but all things were, and as he considered and decided a few days ago, he knew Hannibal was worth it.

"Good, Mylimasis," Hannibal said, slipping off his shoes as he moved Will back towards the bed, wanting to lavish affection on his husband-to-be. He knew his sister would take quite a while in getting changed.

Will felt the bed and his knees gave as he crawled over Hannibal, kissing him down into the plush mattress, shedding his shirt quickly, kicking off his boots as they thudded to the floor. “We have time.”

"That we do," Hannibal groaned, slipping out of his suit coat and shirt, along with his tie. He arched up into Will, biting kisses into his mouth as breathed in the scent of him. "Will..."

Will roamed his hands over Hannibal’s chest, down the front to his pants and undid the trousers, pushed them off. “I should sculpt all of you next, every piece, to match mine.” He took Hannibal’s cock in hand and rolled his balls in his fist with a soft moan.

"I would very much enjoy that," Hannibal moaned, undoing Will's pants as well once he could get his hand between them. He pulled out his beau's cock and began stroking him in

unison. Thumbing over the tip, he twisted his wrist, gliding back and forth slowly. "Mm, yes. Etch our love into clay and preserve it for years to come."

“Put them in our new backyard,” Will whispered, kicking off his pants and boxers, both of them bare and sliding together seamlessly, into each other’s palms. “Scare off the neighbors.”

Hannibal chuckled softly at that, the sound fading into another moan as they worked each other over. "Yours might have the opposite effect and draw them over," he said, dipping his tongue into Will's mouth, heatedly. "Such beauty demands attention."

“And yours would not?” Will laughed, happy that they had their good times of laughter, in while working themselves up into a heated, lustful frenzy.

"Perhaps, though not with the same magnitude as yours," Hannibal grinned, and blindly felt for the lube in the nightstand. He handed it to Will, letting him know it was indeed his turn again when they got to that point. Fitting, since he'd been the one to propose, though it hardly mattered to him who was on top. "I will never stop wanting you, just as I do now."

“I should hope not, Doctor Lecter,” Will said, and dripped lube onto his fingers as worked it over himself and then into Hannibal, slowly, two fingers and then three.

“Never,” Hannibal groaned, spreading his legs as heat coursed through his body and swirled in his core. Will played him perfectly, like an instrument and he tugged him closer to share breath. Heart beating and cock leaking against his belly, he canted his hips to signal his readiness. "Perfect, Will-"

Hannibal's heat alone told Will that his husband-to-be was pried open and pliant. Will shuddered a breath as he pushed his cock in past the first layer of taut muscle. “Hannibal…”

"William..." Hannibal moaned, clutching at his beau's strong shoulders. He licked his lips and took a breath, relaxing himself even more as his heels pressed into the bed in unbridled pleasure. Even just the breech of Will's cock sent him reeling, their coupling never failing to astound him in any capacity.

“You’re always so hot,” Will murmured as he pressed his lips into Hannibal’s and pushed himself in hip deep, letting off a shutter as his body took in the sensation of his cock being sheathed. “Perfect.”

"Yes, very much." Hannibal's eyes fluttered shut, flower blooming behind closed eyes at the sheer exquisiteness of the moment. He opened them once more, taking in Will and all of his masculine beauty as he hooked long legs around his fiance.

Will kneeled between Hannibal's legs and started to thrust, looping his legs over his arms to press down into him roughly, panting as a sheen of sweat appeared over his skin.

Hannibal reached down and curled deft fingers around his hot, throbbing cock and began gliding the silky foreskin back and forth over the swollen tip as his prostate was tapped. He kept his eyes on Will, watching every twist and shift of his beau's chiseled face, his chest

rising and falling rapidly from the debauched pleasure of it all. "There, just like that, Will, Ah-"

Hands grasping Hannibal's thighs, Will pushed into him, down into the bed, pinning Hannibal with his hips, his face fierce and hungry as he gnawed on Hannibal's knee, huffing each breath of work as the pools of heat started to deepen in his thighs and core. "Hannibal-"

Growling, Hannibal snarled, fire sparking and spreading over his skin down through his veins as he was taken just as he craved. He clenched his pucker, strangling Will's cock with the vice-like grip and dug well manicured nails into his beau's sweat covered flesh. "Yes, William-"

Will's face curled into a needy snarl as he started to come, hips bucking wildly into Hannibal as fingers left imprints on this thighs and waist, bruisingly. "I'm, fu-"

Seeing Will come undone like that only heightened Hannibal's satisfaction, it washed through his senses like a tidal wave. He quickened his hand around his cock and felt his balls pull tight, muscles clenching as he spurted his seed over his chest between them. "Oh Will-!"

Sighing softly once he'd ridden out the waves of passion, Will slumped over his beau, huffing to catch his breath. "It just keeps getting better…"

"It does," Hannibal agreed, panting quietly as he wrapped his arms around Will's back, kissing him lovingly. "And we have our whole lives ahead of us to continue exploring new ways to reach unspeakable levels of ecstasy together."

Will smiled at that, his head cast down at Hannibal, even if couldn't see him, he knew his beau was smiling, too. "I can't wait. I've hired a realtor to help with my home."

Hannibal quirked a brow at that. "So you've had this planned for a while, or at least for a few days," he surmised, delighting in the surprises his beau was full of. He rubbed over Will's cooling skin, pressing into taut muscle and hummed. "I am most elated myself. I am pleased you've taken the first steps towards our new life, Will."

"I gave it some thought while sculpting the other day. I was being… selfish. I love you, I can't be selfish and love you, I have to give somewhere," Will answered, resting up against Hannibal after putting his legs down.

"And I love you, Will," Hannibal whispered, touched beyond words by what his fiance had confessed. He leaned up to sweep his lips over Will's, breathing in shared breath and love laced words."It was and is a big step. I am thankful you took the time to contemplate it regardless."

"I was scared, not just of moving, but us… You've proven that you aren't Matthew, you might be similar in some respects, but you aren't him in every other. We're in this together, we're partners, and that's all I've ever wanted in a relationship."

"Fear is a normal part of love. There is often much to lose but I would never treat you as Matthew did. I love you and will insure are always aware of my feelings for you, and that

you are happy," Hannibal promised, thankful Will had given him the opportunity to show him just how deep his love ran. He grasped his fiancé's face gently, stroking his cheek as he gazed at him. "Freeing yourself from me and me freeing myself from you, they're the same. We are partners, lovers and the like. I will always be at your side, Mylimasis."

“Ditto,” Will said with a small smile, swallowing down the emotion the dared to bubble up inside of him. He tested their foreheads together, breathing together, melting as one.

Hannibal rolled Will over with his hips and stared down at him, smiling in return. He marveled at the sheer immensity of their bond and just how far they’d come. Switching thoughts briefly, he pondered on the statue of his beloved and then to Chilton. “Has Doctor Chilton set an appointment with you? I am fascinated to hear what he might have to say.”

“He’s been in and we’ve done the first step, actually, he’s very chatty,” Will said with a sigh, his eyes turned toward the ceiling as though seeing past Hannibal, but not seeing him at all.

“As yes, I can imagine he is,” Hannibal mused, not fond of the Doctor though he did prove to be amusing. “Did he comport himself in a gentlemanly manner?”

“He did, though I am certain he’s infatuated,” Will sighed.

"Ah," Hannibal answered, not thrilled with that bit of information, though he trusted Will and knew he had nothing to worry about. He was also glad he'd told him. "Well, if he becomes too overbearing, do let me know, Mylimasis."

“I will. It’s fine at the moment,” Will said, knowingly.

"Thank you," Hannibal answered, trying to push down jealousy that was not apparent in his tone, but certainly present. The thought of anyone touching or looking at his fiance was maddening. Kissing him once more, he smiled. "The symphony is in about an hour, perhaps we should get ready. hm?"

“Yeah,” Will said, crawling out from under Hannibal and to his feet. “Shall I wear my suit?”

"Please," Hannibal grinned, shifting his thoughts as he stood, looking at his ring and then over at Will. "You will be the most stunning person there."

“Oh?” Will asked, shuffling get through the closet to find his suit by touch.

"Yes," Hannibal answered, and then went to retrieve his clothing for the night as well once Will had located his attire.

Will started with boxers and then an undershirt, all done carefully until he was in the suit Hannibal bought him for the garden party once more. “Is everything on right?”

Hannibal, who had donned a black tux, walked over to Will, smoothing his hands over the suit. "Yes, just allow me to straighten the tie," he hummed, taking a moment to adjust it, though it was more an excuse to touch his fiance again, not that he needed one. "There. Perfect, Will."

“Thank you,” Will said, and ran a hand through his curls, and down his scruffy face.

"You're quite welcome," the Doctor responded, and kissed Will's cheek before stepping back to take his hand. "Come. I'm certain Mischa is ready by now."

Will held out his hand for Hannibal’s, and they walked down to the main floor once more, perfectly dressed. While Hannibal got the car ready, Will fed the dogs, and then met them both out in the garage.

Hannibal opened the doors for Will and his sister."Mischa you look beautiful," he said, taking his fiance's hand for a moment.

"Thank you," Mischa smiled and then saw the ring on Will's finger. "Wait...are you two?"

"Yes," the doctor grinned, "I was going to tell you afterwards but of course you noticed as I'd thought you might."

"Oh my god, congrats you guys."

“Thank you,” Will said, getting into the back, letting Mischa have the front seat.

"You're welcome," Mischa hummed, and then hugged her brother a bit harder than she intended. She'd get Will later since he was already in. The young woman got inside next, and Hannibal closed her door, a smiled on his face as well as he got in and started the car.

"We are likewise finding a new home and plan on being married there. It would please us for you to be in attendance."

"Well of course I will," Mischa said, bucking up as Hannibal did. "Will, are you inviting anyone?"

“My daughter will be there,” Will answered, quietly, taking in the feeling of sitting in the back of Hannibal’s car, for once.

"I can't wait to meet her," Mischa said, her tone friendly as she looked out the window watching the trees pass by. She hoped that they could smooth over any awkwardness from before, especially since Will was marrying her brother.

“She’s great, you’ll like her,” Will replied, hands in his lap.

Mischa only hoped that Will's daughter was more talkative than he was. "Good," she smiled and said nothing more.

"Yes, Abigail is quite the bright young woman, Mischa. Much like you," Hannibal offered, filling the silence.

"Since when did you become so doting, Hanni?" she asked, grinning over at her brother.

"I have never thought you were anything less than exemplary."

"Mhm," Mischa giggled, though it meant a lot to her.

After a few more minutes, Hannibal pulled up to the Valet and exited, Mischa with him. He went over to open the door for his beau and offer his arm as the Valet attendant took the keys.

Will grasped Hannibal's arm when offered, nearly tripping the curb when he didn't realize it was there. "Sorry," he murmured, clutching Hannibal's arm tightly to regain his balance.

"You needn't be," Hannibal said quietly, and then walked a bit slower with his fiance, Mischa on his other arm. He felt surrounded by family and it was all he'd ever wanted. "We are a bit early, thankfully."

"Heaven forbid we bet late," Will teased, unaware of the time currently, and he thought it'd be rude to have his watch repeat it back to him at a place such as this.

Hannibal leaned over towards Will's ear when they paused to wait for the crowd to clear. "I will put that mischievous tongue to better use later, Mylimasis," he teased back and then started leading them through the lobby towards the main area where the symphony was to be held.

Will turned his head toward Hannibal but said nothing. Soon they were ushered in, tickets given and they were shown their seats. Will sat toward the aisle, as better to move if he needed to and not step around people.

Hannibal sat next to him, naturally, with Mischa to his right. As she looked over the program they'd been handed, the doctor took Will's hand, lacing fingers together. "I cannot tell you how delighted I am, for multiple reasons tonight."

"You *could* tell me," Will said with a low, teasing tone, squeezing Hannibal's hand as their palms touched.

That made Hannibal chuckle, quietly and he leaned in to lightly kiss Will's cheeks as the lights began to dim. "Well, I am pleased to be engaged to you, firstly. I am also eagerly anticipating procuring our home and lastly, being here with you and my sister makes for a perfect outing."

"Ditto," Will whispered back, leaning into Hannibal a little, shoulder-to-shoulder.

Humming, Hannibal enjoyed the warmth of his fiance and then turned to Mischa who was grinning. He gave her a playful look of warning and turned his attention to the front as the curtain began to rise.

Will closed his eyes and leaned back in the chair to thoroughly enjoy himself, keeping his hand in Hannibal's, feeling every emotion and swell of the music as it began.

Hannibal did the same once the tempo increased and then opened them up, his eyes welling up from the sheer beautiful of it all. It was exquisite, every note seemingly attuned to his heart. He squeezed Will's hand, rubbing his thumb along his skin as he noted Mischa wiping her eyes from his periphery.

It went on for two hours, and Will didn’t move once, too enthralled, invested. Finally at the end, he let out a sigh. “That was wonderful.”

Standing and applauding next to Mischa, Hannibal looked down at Will. "Yes, it was beautiful," he agreed, and offered his hand. "Shall we?"

"Yes, let's," Mischa said, touching Hannibal's shoulder as she wiped her eyes.

Will stood and took Hannibal’s hand, quiet for now as he kept himself, emotions on overload as he felt everyone else’s around him ten fold.

Hannibal ushered them both out, one on each arm as before, nodding to a few people he knew but didn't stop as he assumed Will would be feeling everything.

As soon as the valet brought around the Bentley, Mischa got in the back this time and closed the door as Hannibal opened the passenger side for Will. "You're up front this time, Mylimasis, my sister insists I'm afraid."

“She didn't have to. She's the guest,” Will whispered, having let his guard down to thoroughly enjoy the music. He knew Mischa felt terrible from earlier, and likely thought him fragile for it. He slipped into the car however, slowly building his forts back up once again.

Mischa honestly wasn’t thinking Will was fragile, she just wanted to earn his favor, and show respect. She looked through her phone in the back, letting the two men converse.

Hannibal got into the car once his fiancé was in and put it into drive. “There is almost nothing I enjoy more than an evening at the symphony,” he commented, pulling out and heading towards home. “Wouldn’t you agree?”

“This is only my second time having gone to one in person,” Will said, ever more aware of just how different he and Hannibal were raised. “It was lovely, thank you.”

"Thank you, for the pleasure of your company," Hannibal said and then smiled at Mischa in the rearview. "Both of you."

"It was wonderful, Hanni," Mischa beamed. She leaned up and touched Will's shoulder. "I'm glad you had fun too. Love that suit."

“Hannibal picked it out,” Will said, not taking credit where it wasn’t due.

"Well it's really nice," Mischa reiterated and then sat back, looking out the window, up at the stars.

“He does have good taste, from what I’m told,” Will commented.

"He does," Mischa smiled, watching the moon that was full and bright, lighting the inside of the dark car. "I taught him well."

"Is that what you think, dear sister?" Hannibal chuckled, his hand on Will's thigh.

"Mhm, I do," she giggled, flipping her hair off her shoulder.

"I do believe you have reworked the truth in favor of yourself," Hannibal added, his tone playful and then looked at Will for just a moment at a red light. "Do you hear what I must constantly tolerate?"

“Constant? I think you’re lucky she is only visiting,” Will teased.

"Do not underestimate her powers, Will, even over the phone she is quite a force to be reckoned with," Hannibal chuckled, rubbing Will's leg.

"You know I can hear what you're saying Hannibal," Mischa scoffed, jokingly. "Maybe I'll have call more often if that's the case."

“Where do you live, Mischa?” Will asked, curious now since Hannibal didn’t actually talk much of his sister.

"I live in New york," Mischa answered with a smile, loving the fashion life there, the culture. "You two should come visit sometime."

“You aren’t too far from here, surprised we haven’t,” Will added, touching Hannibal’s arm.

"We shall have to do so," Hannibal agreed, rolling back down the road and nearing the house again. He smiled over at Will, even if it was more for himself.

"Oh good, please do," Mischa said, enthusiastically, smoothing out her dress.

“After we’ve settled into a new house and everything,” Will offered, kindly, wanting to at least try to be on Mischa’s good side.

"Perfect," Mischa replied, happy that Will was finally seeming like he liked her a little. "That sounds really great!"

Hannibal hummed his agreement, and pulled into the driveway, parking in the garage.

Will didn’t let people in easily, and though Mischa was family now, or would be, he was careful. He silently got out and padded the steps he knew to the door, waiting for Hannibal.

Hannibal got out, and with Mischa behind them, he unlocked the door, walking in with his beau. He removed his coat and hung it, offering to take his sister's. Finally, once he'd hung it up, he touched Will's shoulder gently. "May I, Mylimasis?"

Will nodded, shrugging his coat off for Hannibal. “Thank you,” he whispered, liking the little nickname.

Hannibal smiled and pecked the corner of Will's mouth once he'd hung the coat off, nodding at Mischa when she said she was going to run upstairs and get into her night clothes.

"Would you like some whiskey?" the doctor asked Will, pressing a broad palm against the small of his fiance's back.

“If you’re joining me,” Will said, slipping his shoes off by the stairs when they passed.

"I wouldn't dare refuse, nor want to," Hannibal crooned, slipping his shoes off as well. He ushered them over to the bar where he poured two fingers of whiskey for Will and brandy for himself. "On the back deck?" he asked, as the dogs crowded around their feet. "It is nice out yet."

Will gave a nod, taking the glass when pressed into his hand, and then moved the feet counted to the door, opening it for the dogs, and then stepped out himself. “Warm out.”

"It is, but not overly so," Hannibal commented, stepping out after Will and walking them both over to sit in the outdoor loveseat. He looked up at the stars and wished, just for a moment that his beau could too. In the end though, the beautiful vision to his left was more stunning than anything in the celestial night sky.

“It’s perfect out,” Will said, sipping his drink as he listened to the night sounds around them, aware Hannibal was watching him.

"Yes. It is quite beautiful," Hannibal murmured, his chin tipped up as he stared unabashedly at the love of his life. He took a slow sip of his brandy, licking the residual from his lips as he placed his hand over Will’s affectionately.

“I’ll take your word for it,” Will said, closing his eyes as he had done at the symphony, taking in the sounds of the night.

“Ah but I was mostly referring to you,” Hannibal said quietly, turning his gaze back skyward for a moment to let Will enjoy the silence.

Will took a sip of his drink and then turned his head toward Hannibal. “Kiss me.”

"Gladly," Hannibal said, setting his drink down. He grasped Will's face, gently, and brushed their lips softly, slithering his tongue inside slowly with a hum.

Will hummed softly against Hannibal’s mouth, drink in both hands as not to spill it. “I love you.”

"And I love you, William," Hannibal whispered, continuing to give little kisses and feather-light licks, also minding the drink.

Chapter 10

Chapter by 11Mydesign11, AchillesLament (11Mydesign11), Destinyawakened, Identically_Different

“The realtor called and said my house should sell fairly easily, the market is good for it,” Will explained over lunch a few afternoons later. “She has a house for us to look at in town, just on the outskirts. Waterview, large, out of the way, and elegant. So she says.”

They sat in Will's studio, eating homemade sandwiches, many sculptures lined along the wall, finished or drying.

“Excellent. It sounds as though it is precisely what we are looking for, Mylimasis. However, we will not know for certain until we go and feel for ourselves,” Hannibal mused, after swallowing a bite. “Shall we go this evening?”

“I’ve set up an appointment, yes,” Will said, knowing full well Hannibal’s opinion of what it looked like was far better than this own.

"Thank you," Hannibal commented, a smile in his voice. He leaned over and pecked Will's cheek to show his appreciation. Looking at houses, and things of that nature, were always very appealing to the regal man.

“She said she emailed the address to you,” Will commented since he didn’t really do email or texts well.

"Ah, I have not yet checked," Hannibal said, and then set his sandwich down to pull out his phone once he'd wiped his hands. He unlocked it with a swipe and glanced at his emails. "Yes, it is here. Perfect."

Will bit into his sandwich as Hannibal checked the email. “There should be a link if you want to see pictures…”

"A link...yes, somewhere, perhaps," Hannibal murmured with a quiet chuckle, eyes focused. He found modern technology a bit appalling though it did have its uses; once he found it, he gave it a click. The images loaded and he started thumbing through them. "From what I see here, William, this is most exquisite. It does seem to have everything and the setting is just what we are wanting."

“Is it? She explained the house to me a little, but I knew you needed to see it first. She says the water is good for fishing, too,” Will said, stuffing the rest of his sandwich into his mouth.

Hannibal closed the app and put the phone back into his breast coat pocket, wiping his hands once more before taking the last bite of his sandwich. Once he swallowed, he nodded. "Yes, it is indeed, I do believe you will like it. Nonetheless, I want to see how it feels to you when we go in person."

“Yes, she said it was large, possibly drafty, but that might not be too bad,” Will mentioned, drinking a little water to wash his sandwich down.

"I do believe it will be perfect for social gatherings as well, judging from what I've seen thus far, though I will keep those to a minimum," Hannibal responded, swallowing a bit of water himself. He started cleaning up the trash and placed it in the reciprocal near them. "The price, as it stands is more than fair and there is plenty of space for the pack."

“I thought so too. I won’t get much for my house, but whatever I do get we can put toward the new one,” Will said, diplomatically. “She said there was a lot of rooms, I’m hoping maybe to make one of them my new studio.”

Hannibal didn't intend on making Will spend the money earned on selling his home for their new place but knew better than to argue. "Of course, I think that is a splendid idea," he

concurred, reaching over to take his beau's hand. "Then you could finish teaching me how to sculpt and likewise make the sculpture of me to go with the one of you."

“Yes, and I’d be spending less money with this studio’s lease,” Will said, squeezing Hannibal’s hand, cupping it with his other.

"Very true, William, indeed," Hannibal said with a smile and nod, enjoying the warmth of Will's hands encasing his own. "If you wanted a space all your own for customers and the like, we could likewise have a separate room built outside of our home, if anything. It would prevent people from wandering about inside, hm?"

“We could, we’ll see, yes?” Will smiled and bent to kiss Hannibal’s hand once.

"So we shall," Hannibal hummed, his skin tingling from the kiss. With his other hand, he cupped Will's jaw, thumbing through the soft beard. "I admit I look forward to getting dirty with you. Your hands on my skin, covered in clay. But more than that, our life together and our new home has me quite euphoric."

“Feel like some sort of fairytale, to me,” Will mused, a little smile on his lips as he nuzzled his face into Hannibal’s hand, loving the feel.

Hannibal's heart picked up in tempo, beating against his broad chest as Will accepted his love so freely. It was what he'd longed for and now he--they-- were both getting what they'd wanted and fought to obtain. "We'll let it be a fairytale then," he smiled, whispering the words. "Once upon a time..."

Will smiled at that, brightly, eyes closed as he took in every inch of Hannibal’s out pouring love for him. “My… Count, isn’t it?”

"Yes, m'Lord," Hannibal grinned and leaned in to kiss Will's lips softly. "We will be enjoying many a wonderful evening in our new palace. You will be the talk of the village and know that our faithful subjects will worship nearly as much as I do."

Flushing, Will dropped his chin a little, but then kissed Hannibal again. “If by subjects you mean the dogs…”

Hannibal laughed at that, shaking his head; he loved Will's humor. "Yes, Duke Winston, of course, being the leader of the pack," he hummed, enjoying their playfulness. He sighed, contentedly, and removed his hand from his beau's face. "Have you much work to finish before we depart?"

“Everything is drying, clients pick up tomorrow. Did you want to do something before we meet the realtor tonight?” Will asked, glad they had finally found each other on an even playing field, even if murder had brought them here.

"I did want to mention that I have procured our marriage license, we are good to go in that respect," Hannibal said, with a big smile on his face. "Apart from that, there is nothing further I need to attend to before we are to meet her later."

“We can go get it? Officially married?” Will smiled, standing to get his jacket from the back of his chair. “Let me lock up.”

"Yes, we can go retrieve it and are now officially able to be married," Hannibal grinned, and then stood as well, getting his suit coat and putting it on. "Of course, Mylimasis."

Will knew the studio well enough and had the doors locked up quickly, and then slipped out the back with Hannibal, where his car was parked and away from prying eyes. “I’ll admit, I’m excited.”

"Are you?" Hannibal murmured, unlocking the car with the remote, fingers laced with Will's. "I am likewise eagerly counting down the days that we will be bound together."

“We already are, this is just a union to solidify it,” Will explained, turning to place a kiss on Hannibal’s lips softly, touching his face as he did.

"You are right," Hannibal agreed, hooking his arms around Will's body as he kissed him back gently against the car. "No one could ever tear us apart, my William."

Will grinned against Hannibal’s mouth, arms around his shoulders, honestly and utterly in love. He felt free and bound all at once. “You’re right, they won’t.”

Hannibal was equally enamored, no one could ever hope to compare to Will. He wondered if his beau knew just how much power he had over him. The doctor kissed his fiance again before reluctantly pulled back to open the car door for him. "Mm, and if we do not leave, I may have to show you just how joined we are, here, now..."

Will rested their faces together with soft smile. “Later. If we love the house, we can celebrate with champagne and time by the fire…”

Back in Will's arms again, and gladly so, Hannibal smiled back over his beau's lips. "I do believe that sounds most appealing."

“Good,” Will said, slipping out from under Hannibal, and around the car, to get in.

Hannibal got in as well and then started the car. Once they were both buckled up, he pulled out heading towards the courthouse. "I imagine you never thought our journey would lead us here, did you, Will?"

“I didn’t. I was worried after our first date, and then careless the second we really connected. I’ve been a rollercoaster of emotions,” Will admitted, hands on his thighs.

"You were worth the wait, Will," Hannibal promised, covering his fiance's hand with his own. He made a left turn, the blinker clicking louder as he rounded the corner. "It is entirely understandable that you were concerned and apprehensive."

“You say in hindsight,” Will sighed, shaking his head. “I would have preferred not to have Budge tossed in my face.”

"Am I to understand you still harbor resentment for me, Will?" Hannibal asked, sighing as well. "I have relinquished all of mine for you. More than that you handled Tobias, quite well."

“I hold no resentment, I only hope we don’t quarrel like that again and another person comes between us,” Will explained, their fingers entwining.

Relief washed over Hannibal at that, and he squeezed Will's hand. "You needn't be concerned for that, Will. I have no intentions nor desire to ever involve another in the state of our affairs again."

“You promise?” Will asked, wanting clarity and balance in their lives, not guessing games, or being unable to trust his husband.

"I do," Hannibal assured, nothing but certainty in his tone as he answered. He couldn't ever love another as he did his William. Come hell or high water, he was in it with him until the very end. "I will go to the ends of the earth, if need be, to make sure you know that, Mylimasis."

“Good.” Will let go of a breath he’d been holding. Making another mistake like Matthew wasn’t something he needed nor wanted.

"I have not loved like I love you," Hannibal added, taking Will's hand and bringing it to his lips. He kissed the back and then flipped it over, doing the same to his pulse.

“No?” Will smiled, ducking his head as Hannibal doted on him, something he never got used to, and never wanted to either.

"No," Hannibal grinned, his eyes on the road as he turned into the parking lot of the courthouse, killing the engine. He undid his seatbelt and leaned over the center console, grasping Will's chin to kiss him hard. It was a confirmation, an action to validate his sentiments.

Will hummed, breathing in slowly as he kissed his husband-to-be back, touching his chest with one hand. “I love you, Hannibal…”

"I love you, William," Hannibal whispered, over Will's lips as he cupped his strong jaw reverently and thumbed there. He kissed him once more and then pulled back. "Let us go and get our license then. One step closer towards our lives together."

Will sighed contently and then unbuckled, pushing the door open as he stepped out. Shutting it once again, he carefully found the curb and stepped up on it, hand out for Hannibal. “Here we go.”

Hannibal took Will's hand, feeling a sprig of zest as he smiled. He walked with his fiance, a bit of pep to his elegant step and held the door open with his other hand. "Yes, here we go indeed, Mylimasis."

Smiling, Will walked through every open door Hannibal, held, taking the nonverbal cues his beau put out there for him when he could. “It’s exciting. After this, we just need our home.”

"Yes, and then we can be wed in our backyard as we've planned," Hannibal smiled back, walking towards the desk to obtain their license. He felt jubilant and helplessly enamored.

The woman asked for their identification and proof of citizenship and then started to process their license. Will rocked from heel to toe, hand still in Hannibal’s. He’d never been so excited.

A courteous grin was given to the woman and then a glance cast to Will. He watched as his beau seemed to hum even though not speaking. It delighted him to see that his beloved was as eager as he was.

Once the woman came back with the license, Hannibal took it into his hand and thanked her, turning to Will again. "We are indeed good to go, Mylimasis."

Will smiled, trusting Hannibal as they walked out. “We need someone with authority to oversee the union as well.”

"That we do," Hannibal concurred, trying to think of who that might be. They could always hire someone if nothing else. "Have you anyone in mind?"

“I don’t know anyone,” Will admitted, frowning. “Never been much of a church goer either.”

"Nor am I," Hannibal said, and wrapped his arm around Will's waist as they made it to the car. He gently pressed him against it and kissed the frown there. "Worry not, it is easy enough to hire someone to perform the ceremony."

“You’ll have to look it up,” Will said, nuzzling back in against Hannibal.

"I will make it my first priority," Hannibal promised, gliding his hands up the sides of Will's body, around to the front of his chest where he rested one over his heart.

“House first,” Will said, setting his own hand over Hannibal’s.

"Of course," Hannibal agreed, kissing his fiance once more and then moved off to open the door for him. He then walked around and got in as well, starting the engine once more and buckling up. He was eager to see the house in person and just hoped it would be as beautiful as it had been in the link.

“Is it time? How long did that take us?” Will asked, buckled in already, hand touching Hannibal’s arm.

"It's not exactly time yet, we have another hour or so. However, it’s quite a bit further from here and I'd rather like to explore the area a bit. Perhaps even locate a park for the dogs?" Hannibal answered, placing his hand over Will's for a moment before backing up. "How does that sound, Mylimasis?"

“That’s fine, or we can check out the land. No one lives there at the moment,” Will commented, knowing he wouldn’t be doing much of the ‘looking’, but feeling it out.

"Perfect," Hannibal stated hanging a right at the light, blinker clicking as he waited. He preferred being early honestly. Once it was clear, he turned out onto the road, heading towards the country.

The drive didn’t take too long, and when they got there, Will stepped out, feeling the breeze on his face skating off the water near by. “This is nice.”

Hannibal exited the Bentley and looked around as he walked over to join Will. It was breathtaking. "Indeed it is, and the pack will most enjoy running amuck through the field."

“Lots of room, it feels like. Is there a fence border of the property?” Will asked, head shifting toward Hannibal’s voice.

"There is, and it looks to be about seven acre's worth of land," Hannibal surmised, looking back at Will after surveying a bit more. "Maintained well enough, and a pool in the back."

“A pool? We’ll have to keep them out of that,” Will chuckled, taking Hannibal’s hand.

"Yes," Hannibal laughed, taking his husband-to-be's hand and sighed with elation. "Let's walk a bit closer, shall we?"

“Yes.” Will leaned into Hannibal, silently, and counted steps, and holes, and other things in the earth. “Is the house large?”

"Judging from the outside, I'd say it looks to be about five-thousand square feet," Hannibal explained, pausing whenever he saw needed to let Will concentrate. "Two stories with an attic and a wrap around porch. It's stunning."

“Very large then,” Will said, not sure how big that was, he had no perception of depth or width, but he knew from walking certain lengths.

"Indeed it is," Hannibal hummed, walking past shrubbery that was beautifully sculpted and perfectly placed. "It will take time to become accustomed to the change, for both of us, but I already have a location in mind for our statues."

“Have you? I haven’t even started yours,” Will said, a smirk on his lips as they strolled, growing more and more use to the grounds.

"No, but I am eagerly anticipating when you do," Hannibal flirted, taking in the beautiful scenery, it was peaceful. "I wonder, Will...would you ever want a family. Beyond Abigail, myself and your pack. A child."

“Like… a baby?” Will asked, turning to face Hannibal’s direction. “Never gave much thought to children of my own.”

"A baby, or perhaps adoption," Hannibal commented, gauging Will's reaction. "Of course if it were to be one of your own, or mine, a surrogate would be the ideal. If you wanted, naturally.

It is merely a question I feel should be addressed. No obligations, hm?"

“I don’t know how great I’d be with a baby,” Will said, honestly, head down. “I’m… I mean I’m capable of course, but what I’m not…”

Hannibal cupped Will's chin and gently lifted it up to reassure. "It is alright if it's not something you wish, William, I promise," he said and leaned in to kiss his fiance's lips. "However you do quite well-taking care of Abigail, as well as your pack and while a baby is different, I have no doubts in your abilities to be a good father."

“I wish I shared your sentiments of myself,” Will sighed, against Hannibal’s mouth, eyes closed.

"Do you trust me, Will?" Hannibal asked, stroking his beau's cheek, watching him up close. "If you do then know that I see you for all that you are, as well as all that you can be."

“I do, of course. A baby is a very fragile thing, though,” Will insisted, chewing the inside of his cheek nervously.

"Indeed, yes. We can take some time to think about it then, Mylimasis," Hannibal offered, kissing Will again to try to calm his nerves. "It was merely an idea. All that matters to me is that we are together."

Will placed his hands on Hannibal’s shoulders as he returned the kiss, just softly. “Something to consider later.”

"Precisely," Hannibal smiled, as he heard a car rolling down the driveway, rocks crunching under the tires. He nuzzled his fiance and then whispered near his ear. "I do believe our realtor is likewise a bit early. Better for us then."

“We can get this done with,” Will offered, hoping the house was as great as he thought it was from the description.

"Yes," Hannibal chuckled, turning as the woman approached. He was eager to sign and get moved in, providing it was as nice as he presumed it would be.

Their realtor took them around the house, always explaining everything in great detail to Will, giving him time to count steps if he wanted it, and then gave them time in each room to observe. It took about two hours, but by the time they were done, Will found he’d grown to love the large, spacious house.

“I’ll give you two a moment to consider?” she asked, and then showed herself out to go back to her car to make a few phone calls.

“It’s big,” Will said, first off, “but maybe that’s not so bad. Nothing will be cluttered.”

"I was thinking the same thing," Hannibal admitted, having decided he loved the house and had been hoping Will felt the same. The doctor was already mentally decorating. "I personally find it more than suitable, but I want to make sure you do as well."

“It will take time for me to get used to, but… I think it’s perfect.” Will wrapped his arm around Hannibal’s waist, fitting there just so.

Hannibal grinned brightly at that, his arms going around Will's shoulders as he hummed. "Excellent, as do I, Will." The doctor rubbed their noses together and sighed. Things were coming together. "I'll inform her that we will sign right away."

“Please do. The sooner the better,” Will said, kissing Hannibal’s cheek, and then he let go, wandering the house and feeling out counters and walls, getting used the energy.

Hannibal walked over the realtor and after conversing a few minutes wrote her a check and signed. She was ecstatic, naturally, not having expected payment in full and happily handed over the keys, leaving the paperwork there before she left.

With her gone, the doctor strode over to his beau, and took his hand, placing a set of keys there. "Our first home together, Mylimasis."

“When can we move in? Now?” Will had only ever bought his current house, and it took a while, but banks were involved, lenders...

"Yes, the house is paid for, I wrote a check," Hannibal explained, touching Will's shoulder. "We can move in now should we choose."

“We could get the dogs and a blanket, light up the fireplace…” Will offered, whimsically.

Hannibal smiled at that, bracing both arms on Will’s shoulders. “Let’s do it, then,” he agreed and leaned in to kiss his fiance’s lips. Mischa had already gone back so there was nothing stopping them from doing anything they wanted. “Shall we?”

“Yes,” Will said, decidedly, and letting Hannibal help him back to the car.

"Good," Hannibal hummed, and once Will was inside, he got in also, having locked the house back up before. He put on his seatbelt, started the car and backed out towards home.

After a while, they arrived at home and Hannibal got out, walking inside with Will to get the supplies needed for the night. "I'll retrieve the food and blanket if you wanted to tend to the pack?"

Will gave a curt nod and started to wrangle the dogs, each on a leash and behaving themselves, thankfully. Winston was at his feet, dutifully. “All set.”

Hannibal had made a basket of food to bring and gathered the thickest and softest of all the blankets he had. Once he'd done so, he walked back over to assist Will, bag in hand, along with the basket. "I believed I've got everything, Will. Do you need help with the dogs?"

“It should be fine,” Will answered, all leashes in his hand, keeping them at bay and in toe.

"Very well, then let us depart," Hannibal hummed, walking through to the garage door, which he opened, and then promptly disarmed the car. The doctor popped the trunk and set the items inside. "Did we need anything else? Dog food, or bedding for them?"

“Oh, food. I’ll… I’ll go get it,” Will said, and five minutes later he slowly made his way back out to the car and set the large container of homemade food in the trunk too along with the bowls. “What of us? Are we sleeping over?”

"I was thinking we would sleep over, christen our new place, if that is agreeable?" Hannibal asked, smiling, which was evident in his tone. "I do believe that is all, save for a few pillows. Let me run grab those, if you wanted to get the dogs situated?"

“Okay. Blankets!” Will called after Hannibal, getting the dogs into the car, making sure they stayed. “Don’t move. We’re going to our new home.”

"Okay, Mylimasis," Hannibal called back and then went to get pillows, candles, some wine and two more blankets to add the one he'd already put in the trunk. He was chuckling as he came back and put the items in the trunk with the rest. "I do believe we are set now."

“So are the dogs, Buster is antsy though,” Will sighed, and shut the door and then carefully got into the front seat, buckling in, excited as his hands wrung together.

Hannibal smiled over at Will, observing for just a brief moment before starting the car and backing out of the garage. "I believe they will be as excited as we are once they see how much space they will have in our new home," he offered and then placed his hand over his fiance's as he pulled out onto the road. "I made a nice picnic supper, brought wine, candles and of course the essentials."

“Perfect,” Will said, tapping his fingers on his thighs. “I’ll have to get a mover for my things in Wolftrap…”

"That will be no problem, I can recommend the service I used when first arriving here, if you'd like?" Hannibal suggested, his hand over Will's still. “They can move us both.”

“Good idea. The sooner the better. We can get settled, and married,” Will said, whimsically. “I never thought I was the marrying type.”

"Yes and nor did I," Hannibal mused, turning right, thinking of how everything lead them to the moment they were in. "But I am very elated it is you with whom I'll be married to."

Will smiled, quiet the rest of the drive as he was lost in thought, and then when they arrived he opened the back door for the dogs to run out and sniff out the area. “They’ll be at it a while.”

"I'm certain they will," Hannibal hummed, and got out once he shut off the engine. He popped the trunk, keys in hand and started gathering items. "I did think to bring our sleeping attire, a fresh change, as well as a few toiletries as well."

“Just in case,” Will said, with a smile, and opened his arms to help with anything Hannibal wanted to hand over.

"Yes and thank you," Hannibal smiled back and handed Will the basket of food and draped one of the blankets around his shoulders like a cape. "Ah, I hope it feels as striking as it

looks, seeing you adorned in such a way," he chuckled and then once he had the rest of the items in hand, closed the trunk. "Let's go inside our new palace, M'Lord."

“Lead the way,” Will said, using his free hand to take Hannibal’s arm. “This will take some getting used to.” The paths were longer, the halls of the new place wider, rooms spacious.

"One of the only consistencies in life is change," Hannibal commented, walking slowly with Will as the sun began to set in tones of red, orange and gold. It was stunning. "It will take time but I do not doubt your abilities to adapt and evolve, Mylimasis."

“It is as I have always done,” Will said, knowingly. “This is a positive change. A new life.”

"Indeed, Will. Our new life," Hannibal acknowledged, carefully walking up the steps he knew Will had counted earlier and to the front door. The regal doctor unlocked it once more and gently pushed the door open, turning up the lights at the dimmer switch. "Home at last."

Will counted the new steps to the living room with the fireplace, as he remembered, and set their things down there, reaching and padding around for the firewood. “Do we have a lighter?”

"I brought one with the candles, yes," Hannibal answered, and once he sat down the items brought next to Will's, he pulled it from his trousers and handed it over to his husband-to-be, knowing he was more than capable. "I'll pour us a glass of wine and set up what is to be our bedding for the night while you attend to that."

“Thanks,” Will replied, and took the lighter, setting the logs up just so, and lit them, waiting for the spark of warmth he felt from it and, the slight crackle of burning wood, before moving back.

“You're welcome,” Hannibal said as he walked over and set up their bedding first, safely away from the fireplace. He then went over and poured them each a glass of wine, bringing back the basket of food. Next, he lit two candles for light for himself but also for a pleasant aroma and ambiance for them both. “Ah, that is lovely.”

“Is it?” Will asked, patting the blanket to find Hannibal and then took the glass offered.

"Yes, and it is made more so with your presence," Hannibal said softly, seated on the blanket with the food. He set everything out, placing it within reach. "I have set out a bit of food, should you wish to partake. Havarti cheese, strawberries, figs and bread."

“Why would I not?” Will asked, reaching out for anything he could get, and placed a fig in his mouth with a hum. “Is that honey on the figs?” he licked his fingers slowly.

"It is indeed and it appears as though a bit has strayed from your lips," Hannibal murmured and leaned over to lick the drop from Will's mouth. "Mm, there. Delicious."

Will chuckled and pressed his honeyed lips into Hannibal’s a little deeper. “Mm, so it has.”

Cupping Will's jaw, Hannibal swept his tongue over his husband-to-be's lips and plucked another fig from the container with his other hand. He rubbed it in between their mouths,

taking half between his teeth so that his beau could eat the rest.

Will hummed once more and took the bite and kissed Hannibal's lips with honeyed sweetness. "You're a hopeless romantic you know…"

"I have a love of old world courtesy and courtship," Hannibal whispered, sucking his beau's lips. "More than that, it is only you who brings out a sense of romance and unbridled whimsy in me."

"Good. That's as it should be," Will whispered between their lips. "Likewise, you've woken something in me I never thought I'd see again, let alone this much."

"I am honored then," Hannibal murmured, kissing Will between each word as he pulled a strawberry from the container. He bit it, just enough to let the juice free and trailed it up his beau's neck, to his ripe lips before he then chased the sweet nectar with his tongue and shared the fruit together. "You are sweeter than even this, Mylimasis."

"You are… such a sap," Will whispered, but couldn't help the tingle of love that seemed to radiate off them both. "But I love you."

Hannibal chuckled at that, running his fingers through Will's impossibly soft curls as he drew in each exhalation of breath from his beloved. "Perhaps, yes, but I am thankful for your love and likewise love you too, my William. Always."

"I am thankful we finally found even ground," Will said, aware they would argue now and then, but nothing would keep them apart this time, Will had all his cards in.

"As am I," Hannibal responded, stroking Will's face as he gazed at him awestruck. He was happier now than he'd ever been in all his days and he knew he was fortunate beyond measure.

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A week later, the house was put together and backyard decorated to Hannibal's standards, as Will hardly much input to give on the situation. Abigail helped with the flowers as she chattered away with Mischa, both of them like two peas in a pod now, the mother figure perhaps the girl was missing in her life. Guests started to pour in, not many, but enough that Will started to grow nervous, tugging on his bow tie.

Hannibal's heart was alight, he felt euphoria like never before in the knowledge that today he and his William would make their union official in front of spectating eyes. Dressed in a cream tuxedo, he smoothed out his suit jacket and walked over to his husband-to-be, not concerned over banal superstitious about seeing his groom beforehand. "You look exquisite, Will."

"Thanks," Will said, more nervous over the people than the actual marriage. "Is my tie right?" He was in a blue-grey suit, one Hannibal picked out.

Bringing his hands up, Hannibal touched the tie gingerly and hummed. "It is perfect, Mylimasis, stunning," he assured and leaned in to kiss Will softly as the rest of the guests arrived and went to their seats. "It is nearly time and then we are off for our honeymoon."

“Yes.” Will shifted slightly to hear the crowd around them. He’d gotten Abigail to watch the dogs at the new house with Mischa--since the dogs could be a handful--while they were away.

"I think you will enjoy Paris," Hannibal added, smoothing down Will's lapels as he gazed into his fiance's eyes admiring the color even if he was the only one looking. "We must go get in place, the music has started."

Will nodded and took Hannibal’s hand, both of them walking toward the front of the aisle, with the person they’d managed to procure for their ceremony, a neutral standing woman minister.

At the front now, the small gathering looking on adoringly, surrounded by beautiful navy, gray, and cream decor, Hannibal turned to face Will as the lady began speaking. When it was time, he pulled out the ring acquired for his beloved and began reciting his vows.

"William, fate brought us together, and art, and that has grown into something more beautiful than I ever thought possible. I vow to love you, and only you for all of our days. I will never take you for granted, or fail to recognize your immense strength. I love you."

With that said, Hannibal slipped the ring onto Will's finger, his eyes damp and smiled.

“Hannibal,” Will started, taking the ring that was handed to him and then searched for Hannibal’s hand, “we met on coincidence, but our lives together will be anything but that. You complete me, you’ve become that last piece of the jigsaw puzzle, rounding me out, making me whole.” He slipped the ring on Hannibal’s finger. “I love you.”

With love and emotion swelling in the Doctor's heart and not a dry eye in the crowd, the officiator completed speaking and announced them wed. Hannibal leaned forward and kissed Will, sealing their union as the music picked up in tempo and their guests stood with applause.

"The world is ours, Mister William Graham-Lecter."

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